MR. CHARLES

KING OF ENGLAND

JOHN DRINKWATER

WITHDRAWN

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MR. CHARLES
KING OF ENGLAND
∴
JOHN DRINKWATER

CHARLES II AT THE TIME OF HIS RESTORATION

(By an Unknown Artist)

(From the Hinchingbrooke Collection)

MR. CHARLES
KING OF ENGLAND

BY
JOHN DRINKWATER

NEW YORK
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MR. CHARLES KING OF ENGLAND
— A —
PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

TO

GEORGE CHARLES MONTAGU

Ninth Earl of Sandwich

whose ancestor brought Charles home

NOTE

THE principal sources that I have consulted for this study are Clarendon's *History of the Rebellion* and his *Life* of himself; Guizot's *History of Richard Cromwell and the Restoration of Charles II.*, translated by Andrew Scoble; Burnet's *History of His Own Times;* Grammont's *Memoirs;* and the *Diaries* of Pepys and Evelyn. The Bohn edition of Grammont (1859) contains much useful supplementary information, and a reprint of the *Boscobel Tracts.* Halifax's *Character of Charles II* is referred to in my summary; and other acknowledgments are made in the text. *Monk* by Julian Corbet (1889), and *Montrose* by Mowbray Morris (1909), have been consulted. Of modern books on the subject, my acknowledgments are due to Mr. G. M. Trevelyan's *England Under the Stuarts, The Fall of the Stuarts* by the Rev. E. Hale (1876), Sir Henry Craik's *Life of Edward Earl of Clarendon* (1911), and Mr. Osmond Airy's Goupil volume (1901). I have ventured to differ from these authorities in many conclusions, but Mr. Trevelyan in particular is a guide whose knowledge is invaluable. Information taken from the *Dictionary of National Biography* is apt also to be taken for granted; but the debt of every writer on history is manifest.

I have purposely paid more attention to the earlier than to the later years of Charles's life. In attempting to give the full story in outline, I have remembered that by 1665 or thereabouts the character that is my theme was settled in its salient features.

Lord Sandwich has generously allowed me free use of the extremely valuable Hinchingbrooke papers. From these I have been able to extract a considerable quantity of unpublished material, including two of Charles's letters, and so add many lively touches of personality to my pages. My thanks are also due to Lord Sandwich for four illustrations. Finally, I am obliged to Mr. Alistair N. Tayler, whose enthusiasm for Charles has taken him to the length of reading my proofs.

J. D.

London,
August 1926.

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CHAPTER I

ENVIRONMENT

MR. CHARLES KING OF ENGLAND

CHAPTER I

Environment

I

TO write a political biography of Charles II would be to write the history of Europe during a period of fifty years so riddled by intrigue and so confused in their currents that in many respects they have remained beyond the elucidation of the shrewdest chroniclers. The secret history of the European courts in that age has commonly been rather an epitome of scandal than an authoritative account of policies. From these engaging records many personalities emerge in sharp definition, while the continental issues in which they played a part remain impenetrably obscure. Mazarin, under the creative touch of a Dumas, moves before us with what seems an exquisite fidelity to life, but the inner processes of that subtle, brilliant, vulgar mind have disclosed themselves as little to posterity as they did to the contemporaries whose destinies they so darkly

influenced. No character in our own history has been more patiently or more adroitly investigated than that of Charles called the Martyr, and yet the royal victim took with him more than half his secret to perish on the Whitehall scaffold. Nor need the obscurities that play between event and personality in those years of crowded action much embarrass us. The occasions that they veil are mostly of irrecoverable interest, while the passions then inspired and certain salient ends to which the occasion moved have yielded to the dramatic skill of time for our enlightenment.

The world in which Charles tested so widely the vicissitudes of fortune was of a nature so unlike that of modern society that we have to exercise the imagination vividly to realise its circumstance. The passions liberated by that circumstance were our own, but the circumstance itself was so far from our own as to make the interval of three hundred years a wider gap than the two thousand between ourselves and Athens. Men of Charles's stamp still take the air in the Mall, or preside in government offices, or ruffle it in the shires, but their lives are conditioned by an environment that intellectually and spiritually has undergone an almost immeasurable change.

The game of bluff is patently not extinct in politics to-day, but in those countries, England among them, that have seen the coming of representative government, three hundred years have at least diminished its prestige. Modern critics of

secret diplomacy would have had their hands full in days when nearly every minister in Europe was a spy, and most of them little better than licensed assassins. Criticism was, indeed, not encouraged then as it so wholesomely is now, and in England, as elsewhere, it was not infrequently countered by execution, until one rather staggering execution gave a violent check to that kind of retort. Restoration exuberance forgot for a moment the lesson that had so terribly been given on that snowy morning in January 1649, but it was for a moment only, and authority in England since that time has known that if its conduct provokes argument it has to be answered and not sandbagged. The principle that the death of Charles I did so much to establish was wider than constitutional monarchy, it was constitutional government. Again, the Restoration Court disregarded the word that had nevertheless been indelibly written; as the excesses of the restored monarchy subsided, it became clear that the English will had proscribed not only irresponsible kings, but kings' favourites. Just as there could never again be a Charles I in England, so there could never again be a Buckingham. This at least we owe to the Puritan Revolution, and so impossible does the presence of a Buckingham in the state appear to-day that we can scarcely measure the debt.

But the divine right of the King, and the only less than divine right of the King's favourites, had been forced upon the people almost as a national

tradition by the first two Stuarts in England in less than forty years. It was no merely abstract doctrine, flattering the monarch's self-esteem and the cupidity of successful courtiers, but an active condition carrying incalculable mischief into the whole life of the country. No man knew when or how he might incur the displeasure of the King or one of the King's creatures, nor how dreadful the consequences of such displeasure might be. So long as the theory held that in no circumstances could the King be answerable to his subjects for his actions, personal amiability in the monarch was no guarantee against the rigours of tyranny. On a large scale, as in national affairs, when administration is necessarily deputed from hand to hand, a benevolent autocracy will generally prove as evil in its effects as a malignant one. It was not the least part of Charles the First's tragedy that he could never be persuaded that he was not at all times a kindly father to his people; not, indeed, that it was easy to find anyone with the courage to attempt seriously to persuade him. It is true that, except in the most formal way, he knew nothing about his people, but he believed that he sincerely wished them well. Punishment was necessary when they misbehaved themselves, but he wanted it to be known as rare and never vindictive. He could write to his son in 1648, when his own disaster was upon him, "Give belief to our experience, never to affect more greatness or prerogative than that which is really or intrinsically for the

good of subjects, not the satisfaction of favourites," genuinely unconscious of the continual outrage with which subjects had met under his rule and of the shameless satisfaction that favourites had been encouraged to expect from him.

Charles the Second had, as we shall see, an infinitely wider experience of human affairs than his father, and he had also common-sense and humour, but it was not to be expected that his mind should wholly disengage itself from a habit which it had inherited in such apparent security. If the divine right of kings was not for him the myopic but burning faith that it was for his father, it was at least a pretence that might just as well be accepted. Adversity in his own fortunes, and the bitter retribution exacted at Whitehall for his father's errors, tended to convince his practical mind that while the doctrine was now more clearly than ever a pretence, it also was more than ever to his interest to flatter it. No one at that time could foresee the conditions upon which he would eleven years afterwards be recalled by a new democracy to the throne. When it later became apparent that England was ready for a constitutional monarchy, and that nothing but a constitutional monarchy could then satisfy its needs, Charles was the only choice, and we shall see how far he was able and willing to make a show of adapting himself to the new order of kingship. But in 1649, with the Crown publicly dishonoured and himself in exile, his only hopes of restoration must have seemed to

be not in the coming of some visionary new order that nobody had yet begun to define, but in the possible re-establishment of the old. From the time when, at ten years of age, he was already taking part in state ceremony, through the misfortunes of the war, through the years of exile and miserable poverty, and through the long negotiations that preceded his return, kingship meant for Charles the office as it had been formulated by his father and grandfather. It could have meant nothing else. Lip-service might still be given to theories of the liberty of the subject, and some of his advisers might really understand that after 1649 this liberty was an idea that was bound sooner or later to prevail in practice, but the old influences were likely rather to intensify than to perish in defeat. Moreover, they would be encouraged by many contacts. In the years of his discomfiture Charles's experience of rebuffs and duplicity in the courts of Europe would have broken a heart less stout, as they often sickened his, but it was never suggested to him that his proper place was not on the throne in direct succession to and invested with the authority and privileges of his father.

Before the Restoration, the Marquis of Ormonde, one of Charles's truest friends, wrote to Edward Hyde, another, "his immediate delight in empty, effiminate, and vulgar conversations is become an irresistible part of his nature, and will never suffer him to animate his own designs and others' actions with that spirit which is requisite

for his quality, and much more to his fortune." Hyde himself, labouring with a devotion that nothing could daunt in what seemed for years to be a forlorn cause, was beset with like misgivings. Charles, in fact, was often indifferent altogether as to the nature of kingship. His natural indolence in part, and in part the cynical humour that not surprisingly he acquired during his exile, helped when the time came to make him divert himself with the indulgences of power to the neglect of its responsibilities. By the time he came into his kingdom, he was heartily sick of disputes as to what coming into a kingdom really involved. After years of privation when he and his pathetic little travelling court could hardly even pay for to-day's dinner, and were frequently uncertain whether they could get to-morrow's on credit, he wanted money, lots of money and no defaulting; after never being sure for a month on end whether he was a guest or a prisoner, he wanted security; after having to do as he was told by half the Dukes and Electors and Cardinals and Grandees in Europe, he wanted independence; and after having had to school himself daily to dissemble conciliation to the princes who were his equals, he wanted authority whereby he could give them a piece of his mind when he felt like it. In the prospect of securing these after what until the last moment seemed hopeless delays, he was content to let others fight out theories of kingship for him, and come to what decision they would.

All this was, no doubt, highly immoral, but it is far from being unintelligible: in the light of Charles's character it is even not unpleasingly natural. Another man might, indeed, have made the Restoration one of the supremely heroic events of history. Had he been as conspicuously endowed with virtue as he was with ability, he might have realised what moral splendour was waiting to be touched to life in the conditions that in themselves must have been plain enough to his quick wits. But his character had no leanings this way, and in any case he represented a temper that had been somewhat severely tried by moral splendour for twenty years.

We say that the conditions of his restoration were clear to Charles's intelligence. The evidence as to what these conditions actually were is at first sight a little confusing. It is true that when at last Charles was brought back to London, he was welcomed in terms and with manifestations that gave the Restoration an appearance of being unconditional. The period that followed Cromwell's death was one of acute anxiety to all Englishmen. Men who had been foremost in helping to establish the Commonwealth realised that there was no one with anything like the qualities necessary for controlling the instrument of government that had been so fatefully devised and employed by the great Protector. Richard Cromwell, Oliver's own nominee, was a figure of mirthless fun; but even if he could be set aside, who was there that

the nation, or any powerful section of the nation, would accept in his place? And the answer was that there was no one. Government rapidly degenerated into a mere series of squabbles between Parliament and the Army, and when in April 1659 a council of disgruntled officers turned one House of Commons into the street, and a month later recalled the old Rump of 1653 on sufferance, just men in all parties knew that the happiness and even the security of the country, in so far as they depended on stable government, were bound inevitably for disaster unless some decisive step were taken. And the only decisive step possible was to direct all the contending factions to one point of agreement in the throne; as to who the occupant of the throne must be there was no difference of opinion.

And so it was that staunch Cromwellians, not out of caprice, but in deference to a strict logic of statesmanship, suddenly found themselves demanding that the monarchy should be set up again. So it was that Edward Montague, Cromwell's Admiral and an Ironside by nature, contrived the fleet into support of the returning Stuart, and in due time escorted the King back to his kingdom, receiving the Garter and the peerage of Sandwich as tokens of the now once again royal favour. So it was, also, that the London that had acclaimed the death of Charles I as a deliverance with something of shocked awe, now acclaimed the restoration of his son as deliverance with unfeigned transports of joy.

Citizens who a few weeks before dare no more than whisper a secret sympathy for the exile if they had it, could now respond in a delirium of thanksgiving to any ragamuffin who should stand up and cry "long live the King." In this atmosphere of general felicitation, therefore, Charles may well, for the moment, have felt that all the people wanted was a king again on any, and not on specific, terms. But his own shrewd intelligence, and his own experience as well, must have told him, on the briefest reflection, that this was far from being the truth of the situation. Nor is it easy to follow Sir Henry Craik, the distinguished author of the commendably partisan *Life of Edward Earl of Clarendon,* when he speaks of Charles being restored "on conditions that virtually obliterated all the changes that the Civil War had brought about."

For these were changes that nothing in coming time could obliterate, and Charles, with the candour to himself that with all his faults was natural to him, must have known it. Popular prostration was a very fitting ceremony with which to greet a king who for more than ten years had suffered the severest pains and indignities of banishment, and the occasion was not one for harping on reservations. But the reservations were inexpungably there, written in the blood of a prolonged and hideous tragedy. In the days when Charles was only casting about for means to his end without any apparent prospect of gaining it, when, for example, he was conducting that strange interlude

with the Scotch Covenanters, he had reason to accustom himself to the idea that if ever he was to be a king in being it would be on stringent undertakings only. He had learnt then that it was impolitic to talk of the divine right of Kings to the divine right of the Kirk. The Covenant as a solution of his problem gradually faded away, but the necessity of accepting terms remained constantly before him in one form or another. When at length the hope of his life was realised, the claims of any particular interest in the state had subsided. But they had subsided only in favour of a far greater interest. The internal feuds that had for years tortured England were now composed in one common determination—that there should be a monarchy again, and that it should be a constitutional monarchy. It must have taken long to convince Charles that when he returned to the throne it would be as the involuntary champion of a cause so alien to his race. But that when the Restoration came he was so convinced in the limpid recesses of his mind there can be no doubt.

It may well have been in these recesses only. Against realisation in the daily habit of his thought two forces would still be active. Still there would cling to his consciousness the old tradition of divine right, flattered by the ostentatious display of popular geniality. The superstition was in the Stuart blood, and if Charles was naturally far less the prey of superstition than either his crafty grandfather or his artless father, he was for a time, at

least, tempted to a belief in this particular superstition by a public indulgence such as neither James I nor Charles I had ever known. He understood, we may be sure, what the real position was, but it would have needed a much sterner character than his not to foster the illusion, so favoured by circumstances, that he had come not into a new dispensation, but into the unbroken inheritance of his fathers. If we could penetrate to the centre of his consciousness, we should almost certainly find that throughout his reign Charles II was continually oscillating between two dominant ideas, one his birthright by blood and tradition, the other evolved in his own experience and in his instinct for seeing things as they were. He could envisage himself clearly enough as comfortably secure in the divine succession, but he would nevertheless be aware, not without a grimace of irony, that he was in fact the founder of truly constitutional monarchy in England. It was certainly a strange destiny for a Stuart.

The other force of which we speak was his preoccupation with the more luxurious amenities of life, implying political indolence. So far as he considered the problems of his office at all, he must have done so in terms that have been suggested. But the Restoration court knew many days when to consider them at all would seem a wanton waste of opportunities for more profitable pursuits. If Charles had the gifts for speculation on these high matters of state, he was seldom inclined to exercise

them. He had been so much more thoroughly through the mill than most kings, and after all what the deuce did it matter?

So that, in this respect alone if in no other, it will be seen that the character of Charles, while it may be familiar in itself to our own understanding, was expressed in conditions that we have to reconstruct. Apart from the complexities peculiar to his moment in history, he belonged to an age when the English people were first asserting that they had rights, not by the politic indulgence of the monarch as under the later Tudors, but by the privilege of God. The insistence on such rights sounds even a little grotesque to a generation that hardly realises that they were ever disputed, and romantic sentiment for a martyred king may readily make us forget that the martyrdom cost and what it meant. There is still enough of shameful abuse and iniquity in our state to-day, but at least we have no Star Chamber, and that we have not is due to the ruthless indignation that culminated in the scene at Whitehall and to nothing else. The rights that we accept and hand on without a thought were fiercely contested issues that conditioned the whole life of a nation in the years that saw the birth, the eclipse, and the ascension of Charles II, and it was in terms of this conflict that his character was moulded. His part was in a great action, and if his appearance affected none of the gestures of nobility, it has, it would seem, not proved the less memorable for that.

II

There are other respects in which the age of which Charles was in his own way a representative figure differs widely from our own. I need, I hope, not point out again that these contrasts are drawn merely as suggesting that we can only perceive the strangely impressive continuity of human character when we realise the fluctuating circumstances in which character is called upon to act. Charles, then, was a debauchee. Debit and credit in these matters, it may seem, has to be left to some final reckoning at which happily we shall not be called upon to preside. However that may be, the numerous people who suffer from a passion for forgiveness certainly may find ample scope for their ministrations in the character of Charles, which bristles with delinquencies. His eminence in debauchery may perhaps be not entirely due to natural vice; many obscurer sinners would press him hard with his opportunities, his indifference to censure, and with no severer public standards to control them than were prevalent in his age. Still, he remains in some respects what the world calls a bad man, and in those respects we have to accept him as such. And yet one of the chief concerns of his life was religion. It, like the theory of kingship, was a governing influence upon his character, in a way that this age cannot realise by common experience, and so much so that it is

necessary to consider what exactly it did mean in the shaping of his story.

Religion, formal and defined religion, that is, as distinct from a natural piety, is no doubt still a profound inspiration to countless individuals, but it is no longer a burning issue in the public life of the community. It can hardly be said to be an issue at all; it is doubtful whether the average Englishman to-day could tell you what, if any, is the formal religion of three out of ten of his most intimate friends. In the seventeenth century it was different, so different that while then the Bible was the authority to which every kind of appeal was made in daily life, there are to-day few among us who would not be shy of being seen reading a Bible in a railway carriage. When I made Cromwell in a play preach and pray without reckoning time or place, and talk as though God were to be met in the paddock outside, half the critics in England exclaimed that the spectacle was dull. They didn't really mean that, because a man in prayer is not dull; what they meant, although they had not the courage to say so, was that it shocked their sense of decency. You can't, they felt, have people praying about the place in public like this. But in those days outward professions of faith were a common practice among men, and differences in religious opinion were not politely disregarded. On the whole, it would be easier for a communist to find favour in a die-hard club to-day than it was for a Presbyterian to contain himself in the pres-

ence of an Episcopalian in the England of 1650-60. Professed religion in that age was exploited by knaves and bigots to whom even the political chicanery of our own time would seem amiably spiritless, but abused as it was by intrigue and sectarian passion, it was a force in the land conditioning not only the conscience, but the external behaviour of many thousands of just and candid men.

Charles, with his ready accessibility of nature, took the impact of this religious temper in both its aspects. It was in the name of religion that more than half the political devilry in Europe flourished, and in that measure religion was wholly degraded from spiritual significance. Cardinals and bishops and elders alike used the grace of God merely as an elixir in the pursuit of a nefarious statesmanship, and reverends of every description daily dishonoured in practice the name on which they so diligently called. Never in history has the Church of God on earth been more shamelessly employed in defiance of any conceivable will of heaven than it was in the later part of the seventeenth century, and nowhere was it more so than in England. In this disreputable process Charles played a ready part. Before his negotiations with the Covenanters finally broke down, he had learnt perfectly to match them in all the arts of sanctimony, and we have the story of the deputation of London ministers, who just before the Restoration had come to Flanders to be assured of the return-

ing King's Protestant soundness. Charles contrived that the leader should be left waiting in a room adjoining his own closet, and there the worthy divine was edified by overhearing the royal devotions thus: "Lord, since Thou art pleased to restore me to the throne of my ancestors, grant me a heart constant in the exercise and protection of Thy true Protestant religion. Never may I seek the oppression of those who, out of tenderness of their consciences, are not free to conform to outward and indifferent ceremonies." No faction in Europe in that age was above the use of religion as a mask for political intrigue, and refusal to comply with the common practice meant a heavy drag upon ambition. The ablest of the Stuarts had no scruples about using this indecent kind of diplomacy; he was far too shrewd not to see that to neglect it would be seriously to injure his rising prospects, and when it suited him to engage in it he did so as an adept.

That, however, is but one side of the question. Government by the abuse of any principle is possible only when the principle itself is a widespread and living reality. The corruption, for example, that in our own time we have seen prosper in high places under the guise of patriotism is nothing but a distorted reflection of the genuine patriotism that has inspired our generation. Nothing is easier than to commit enormities in the name of virtues that are dominant at the time, a circumstance that has been persistently exploited in history by

unscrupulous authority. Leaders of the Roman Empire, inflamed by the lust of conquest, assured themselves of popular support by advocating the enforced conversion of the barbarians to enlightened civilisation, the astute appeals to civic pride taking plausibility from the profound ardour that civic pride actually was among the Roman people. The worst terrors of the French Revolution were committed in the name of a freedom that in spite of all excesses was a beacon of ideal purity to millions of troubled minds. When Potsdam wanted to impose its will upon the world, it cultivated the doctrine of power among a people who by nature cherish power as an intellectually constructive means and not at all as an instrument of military swagger. On no people was it so easy to impose the drill sergeant as on the Germans, and probably by no people has the drill sergeant been more detested. And the wisest heads in America to-day are gravely concerned by the efforts of a few people who are money-mad to impose the dollar as a standard upon a country where at large the value of prosperity as a social influence is so admirably understood.

So it was with religion at the time of which we are writing. It was a powerful ally of corruption only because it was a governing impulse of the age. And while Charles was as willing as anyone to exploit it when it served his interests to do so, he also knew something of the impulse itself. What

BLANK SHEET OF PAPER, SIGNED BY CHARLES, ON WHICH PARLIAMENT WAS TO NAME ITS OWN TERMS FOR HIS FATHER'S LIFE

(From the British Museum)

was the measure of this realisation it is difficult to say; "the mystery of the King's religion," says one historian,[1] "is so insoluble that it is impossible to affirm or deny with certainty." When an age has composed itself in perspective into sharply defined parties we are apt sometimes to overlook the temper that was common to all parties alike. The religious temper of Milton's age grew rank in the uglier fanaticism of the Puritans, and zeal declining into cant in due time provoked the impious mockery of the Restoration court, but there were many pliant adherents of that court who derived as plainly from the age of Milton as did any Praise-God-Barebones of crop-head frenzy. The lunatic fringe of the Puritan revolution, of which we have been told so much, consisted not only of gloomy and savage bigots; the profligate levity of the Cavaliers is an inseparable part of its strangely blended texture. The one kind of excess is as much as the other begotten on a temper that was exclusively neither Puritan nor Cavalier, but generally prevalent in the England of the time. It is easy, and misleading, to lose sight of the fact that, with all their violent differences, Henry Ireton, for example, and Charles II were children of the same age, and that they drew something from that age in common; further, that the exigencies of the time could throw into contending camps men so naturally alike as Andrew Marvell and John Evelyn.

[1] Osmund Airy. *Charles II.* 1901.

III

The whole circumstance of the Civil War has encouraged this habit of regarding the Cavaliers and Roundheads as definitely separable types, essentially sundered in mind and character. Time commonly erases differences of opinion from the records of personality, and we think easily enough of Burke and the Pitts and North and Fox as representative Englishmen, hardly distinguishing between the parties that claimed them in their many conflicts. How many people for whom mid-Victorian politics in England mean the impressive and discordant figures of Gladstone and Disraeli could say off-hand what were the principal issues that occasioned one of the bitterest animosities in political history; could say which of those great men, for example, supported and which opposed the successive Reform Bills of their time, Bills of far-reaching consequence—what, indeed, the Bills actually were? Everybody knows all about George Washington; very well then—was he a Tory or a Whig?

But the contentions of Roundhead and Cavalier have not been moderated in this way. They were too spectacular ever to fade from chronicles of the time. The Star Chamber, John Hampden's ship money, the execution of the King, the startling advent of a Commonwealth, the flight of the Prince after Worcester, baubles, curses, and purges, oak trees and spaniels and orange girls—such things survive as clearly as the great person-

alities themselves, and help to keep in general memory the issues upon which those personalities were so fiercely engaged. The very apparel of the protagonists emphasises the dramatic contrast. When the Cavaliers took the field they did so with as gallant a display as has ever lent colour to war. Martial elegance could go no farther, and Cromwell, with his remarkable histrionic instinct, was quick to see that to compete with his adversaries in this parade of sartorial splendor would inevitably be to cut a poorer figure than they; and he devised the Ironside uniform, thereby scoring a superb dramatic effect, not a little disconcerting to his enemies, and at the same time striking a contrast that the imagination of history would never be able to forget.

The differences, of opinion, of manners, of aims, and even of appearance, have therefore remained in clear definition as between the two parties. A war of races different in colour could hardly bring into conflict opponents of a wider dissimilarity, as it certainly would be unlikely to bring them into conflict on so fundamental an issue. And yet we disregard one clue to reality if we forget that after all these antagonists were all alike Englishmen of one age, and that excesses in either direction could be traced to a common origin. The libertine court, that has to no small extent taken its reputation from the King's personal example, was as severely censured by many active loyalists as by the gravest adherents of the overthrown Common-

wealth. Evelyn, at the moment of Charles's death, writing with every anxiety to be generous to a character in which he found much to admire, and to a severeign from which he had received many kindnesses, could add:

> I can never forget the inexpressible luxury and profaneness, gaming, and all dissoluteness, and as it were total forgetfulness of God (it being Sunday evening), which this day se'nnight I was witness of, the King sitting and toying with his concubines, Portsmouth, Cleveland, and Mazarine, etc., a French boy singing love-songs, in that glorious gallery, whilst about twenty of the great courtiers and other dissolute persons were at Basset round a large table, a bank of at least 2,000 in gold before them; upon which two gentlemen who were with me made reflections with astonishment. Six days after, was all in the dust.

The real nature of this rank profusion, as delineated in such passages as this from Evelyn, has, I think, been largely misrepresented by the imagination of history. No over-statement of the laxity of Restoration morals could well be made; but to see the Whitehall of Charles II as a scene of sustained gaiety that, flagrant as it was in vice, was yet something vital and positive, something inspired by a Boccaccian wickedness, is to misconstrue the evidence. Unlicensed pleasure had its frequent triumphs as the Restoration court undoubtedly, but in its common and interminable routine of intrigue that court must have been one of the dullest places on earth, and its rakes in progress often remind us merely of the automatons who now devote themselves to the dreary banalities of the night clubs.

This question, however, will be for later consideration. The immediate point is that so devoted a follower of the Stuart cause as Evelyn was clear in his disapproval of the court's conduct, whatever the anatomy of that conduct may have been. Pepys, far less exacting in his standards, and writing as we know without regard for public opinion, is as uncompromising as Evelyn himself. In August 1661, he is sorry to hear of "the lewdnesse and beggary of the Court . . . which I am afraid will bring all to ruin again." Eighteen months later he notes, "Publick matters in an ill condition of discontent against the height and vanity of the Court." In July 1667, "the Court is in a way to ruin all for their pleasures," and readers of the diary will remember the undertone of reproach that the behaviour at Whitehall provoked from even so indulgent a critic and one whose personal and public interests were so wholly with the restored monarchy.

While, then, the contrasts in this crisis of our history are sharp and founded on reality, we have to remember not the contrasts only. And if Charles was in many respects the representative figure in which one of the extremes that point the contrast was most fully expressed, we still have to bear in mind that this is far from being a sufficient definition of his character. Most importantly, we have to realise that the religious instinct, the theme upon which half the political activities of the age were variations, was an influence that played upon

him as actively as it did upon thousands of the people who cried out on the blasphemy of his life, some with genuine anxiety and some with profane self-satisfaction. One of the most curious of common fallacies, held against the testimony of the criminal calendar, is that religious men are necessarily good men. Advocates of this heresy, when confronted with the spectacle of set religious professions declining on some disgraceful notoriety, explain that manifestly the professions must have been hollow. But, unhappily for amateurs in the science, psychology is much more obstinate in its caprice than they would have it, and, confusing as it may be, the churchwarden who daily derives consolation from a piety that he does not parade may turn out to be a person of shocking lapses in his conduct. Reflection can no more believe Charles to have been governed wholly by bad impulses than it can question his natural ability; but a great many people, who see the bad impulses so effectively displayed, find it difficult to accept religious feeling as any part of Charles's character. This is to pretend that religion must be something that very often it is not. Charles's religion, we may allow, was an easy-fitting garment, that he was unwilling should interfere with his pleasures; godly observers might even complain that his attention was by no means always on the pulpit at sermon time in church; that it was in fact secularly inclined towards an adjoining pew. Adept as he could be in matching even priestly dissimulation

when interest demanded it, vanity did not escape the keen edge of his wit because it happened to be the vanity of divines. When the Covenanters were trying to preach him into conversion and out of his senses, he could afford them every satisfaction in his demeanour, and then go off to his ribald laughter at their expense with Buckingham. Of the religion that makes saints Charles knew nothing, but at least he was always perfectly clear as to the point at which religion degenerates into humbug. He did not confuse cant with piety, and would have enjoyed the jest of the sailors who, used to Puritan ordinances against swearing and the English liturgy, declared that the first time they had ever heard either the Common Prayer or God-damn-ye was on His Majesty's ship as they brought him back to his throne from Holland.

The argument here advanced is then, it should be noted, not that religious feeling was a virtue that must be reckoned against the many defects of Charles's character, but that religion, it may be for no conspicuous good, was definitely part of the environment in which his character was formed. Whatever his attitude towards religion and its effect upon him may have been, religion itself did exist for him as a problem, and this to some extent in terms of his conscience as well as in terms of policy. As so often happens with men who have really suffered the vagaries of fortune, Charles was little given to talking about himself, being intent rather on making the most of present opportunities,

and what his spiritual bent actually was we have no means of knowing; but cynical dismissal of the possibility of his having had any spiritual bent at all will not help us. Indefinite as the history of the time is in many matters, nowhere is it more so than in recording the ramifications of design and counter-design that distracted the struggle between Protestantism and the Church of Rome. We know enough only to suspect zeal in either cause of being neither pure nor incorruptible. A few holy men there were untainted, and touchingly convinced that the service of God could be measured by the observance of form. There was no church but had members not fanatically eager for martyrdom, but serenely ready for it if it had to be, veritable witnesses of revelation. Such devotion would be unintelligible to Charles, as it has been to many finer spirits, and he was no doubt prepared at any time to declare himself defender of whichever faith could demonstrate that it was most likely to defend him. The reciprocal advances made between himself and Rome at intervals throughout his life were regulated by nice calculation of favours to come, and the ghostly diplomats of Europe found themselves opposed to an adroitness equal to their own. And yet the strange scene at the end of Charles's life, when the attendant courtiers and ecclesiastics were bustled out of the room, and Father Huddlestone, a priest who had befriended the King during his flight from Worcester, was admitted by a side door to admin-

ister the offices of the Roman Church, had a significance beyond this. The King was now no longer concerned with diplomacy, and in any case he was surrounded by influences strongly antagonistic to his taking any such step. Also he was dying. Death-bed conversions may lack authority, but they are at least usually the consequence of preceding interest, and in the case of Charles it cannot be argued that he was prompted at the end by a desire for the consolations of religion, since he could have received these from the assurances of his own divines. The only possible explanation of his doing as he did is that for personal as distinct from state reasons he wanted to.

This view is supported by the striking account given by Evelyn of a conversation held between Pepys and James II some nine months after Charles's death. Pepys, encouraged to make so bold by the familiarity of the King, observed that it "was whispered among many whether his late Majesty had been reconciled to the Church of Rome. . . . The King ingenuously told him that he both was and died a Roman Catholic." James attempted to explain that it was on some politic and state grounds, but confessed his doubt as to what these could have been. He thereupon showed Pepys papers containing a defense of Rome written by Charles in his own hand, "blotted and interlined," and drafted apparently for no purpose but his own satisfaction. Pepys was allowed to carry away copies, attested by James himself,

and these in turn he showed to Evelyn, who much deplored the anti-Protestant heresies they contained, and had the good sense to be thankful that although the new King had conformed to the same errors, at least it was openly so. Again, no claim is put forward that Charles's religious convictions were a grace upon his life, nor that he behaved in the matter with any commanding credit. The point is that he had such convictions, that in his own way they caused him some labour of the spirit, and that in them one of the deepest preoccupations of the age made its mark also on a man who might have been the comic hero of Congreve's most daring genius.

IV

The divine right of kings, so mercilessly challenged in 1649, and visitations of the Lord, so terribly vindicated at Naseby and Marstoon Moor, so disregarded in the fantasia of a court where the Queen was openly afraid of the mistress, not to say of a dozen mistresses, and yet so persistent; these were principal elements in the environment that evolved the greatly abused, greatly erring, and yet not unattractive and far from unformidable figure of Charles II. But not the only principal elements. Politic theory and religious emotion contributed much to that evolution, but not all. His natural talents and blemishes, emphasised alike by his almost unexampled experience, are, inevitably, the

fundamental conditions of Charles's character, but to the lungs of character environment is air, and these circumstances with others must be so considered. The chief, indeed the only valuable record of an age's imagination is its art; in the particular genius of English life it may be said to be largely, if not exclusively its literary art. If evidence of one kind and one kind only had to be preserved of the England of 1630 to 1680, who would hesitate to name Milton, Marvell, Herrick, Bunyan, Hobbes, Herbert, Crashaw, Vaughan, Walton, Jeremy Taylor, Dryden and Wycherley? Critical virtuosity has for long been anxious to decide whether an age is most truly reflected in its major or in its minor writers, which, indeed, is for an age and which for all time. The answer is that the best writers best accomplish both ends. Through its great writers an age is sublimated in terms that will be significant to all ages, and this though the material and idiom adopted may sometimes have little external relevance to the time. Elizabethan England lives in *Hamlet* and *Henry V,* and William Morris, being a poet and not an antiquarian, recreated the thirteenth century only to find himself a representative of the nineteenth after all. So that these writers whom we have named, with a few others of their own stature, tell us most pertinently what the age of the later Stuarts really was in its daily habit, and at the same time convey to us its abiding influence upon the story of our race. The England that Charles

inherited, and in due time so strangely governed, would have disappeared, in any signal dimensions, had it not been for the reports of writers such as these. It was, as we have said, an England almost incredibly removed from our own England in external aspects, but we learn from these master minds both how vivid those distinctions of aspect are and how little they denote change of heart. The denizens of Mayfair or Southern California observe a code neither better nor worse than that which governed the Restoration court, but one so different in *decor* as to denote, it would seem, another range of impulse. The young bloods of Bond Street mostly think of Whitehall in 1660 or so—if indeed they think of it at all—as a dull epoch of history. If they manage a little more than this, they are agreeably stimulated by the discovery of a *régime* that produced a crop of suggestive memoirs. But that they would themselves have been perfectly at home in Whitehall does not occur to them, unless they indulge in vicarious excesses under the influence of Hollywood. Yet we know from those masterpieces, ranging from *Paradise Lost* down to *The Country Wife,* that any characteristic group of our own time would find occasion for perfect fidelity to type, were it to be transported to the Restoration scene.

The England presented in this literature is, it must be added, complex enough. Nor are our witnesses by any means exact in their evidence, though this by a paradox enlightens rather than

confuses us. Bunyan and the Restoration drama, Milton and Rochester—antitheses, we might suppose, could not be more startling. And yet we find the oddest bedfellows. For example:

> The most firm, clear, exalted Soul alone,
> Is that, in which least Perturbation's shown;
> As in sublimest regions of the Aire,
> Tempests are less heard, dark Clouds least appear;
> But still serene, calm, glorious known to be,
> From Clouds and Storms beneath 'em, clear and free;
> Whilst sultry Meteors, Storms are hatch'd below,
> Foul, or fair Weather there, does come and go;
> Exalted minds, as Heavn's, in change, no Changing know.

And again:

> Since he, but as he thinks, his Reason more,
> Doubts more his Maker's Being, and his Pow'r;
> Of Happiness here, and hereafter too,
> Deprives himself, by his vain Reason so;
> Since he, but for his Knowledge, or his Sense,
> Cou'd give to God, or take at Man, Offence;
> So that his Reason, does his Nonsense show,
> Who proves less wise still, as he more does know;
> Whose knowledge does his Happiness prevent,
> His Guilt increase, and lessen his Content,
> But for which, he were Free, Safe, Innocent.

And yet again:

> And still, the Honestest, as Wisest sort
> Of Men, choose to dismiss themselves from Court;
> The Court has then, more gracious to you been,
> Putting you out, than when it took you in;
> Since sure, the greatest Obligation still,
> Is that, that's done a Man against his Will;
> Which spares the Lazy, Proud, yet Bashful Wit,
> The Trouble, Pains, or Shame of asking it.

Technique apart—and how widely apart does

not matter—this might be Milton speaking. And yet it is not Milton, but William Wycherley, perhaps the lewdest poet of his own or any time, whose less indecent occasions could be *To the Honour of Pimps, and Pimping; dedicated to the Court; and written at a Time when such was most considerable there,* or *To a fine young Woman, who being ask'd by her Lover, why she kept so filthy a thing as a Snake in her Bosom; answered, 'T were to keep a filthier thing out of it, his Hand; and, that her Snake was to play with, and cool her in hot Weather; which was his Aversion.*

Ten years younger than Charles Wycherley was one of the brightest ornaments of the court, and dependent upon its favours. Unexcelled in wit and remarkable for his personal elegance, he soon found these favours lavishly bestowed by the King, by his courtiers, and by the ladies of his suite, Lady Castlemaine being especially kind. The greatest comic genius of his age, until the appearance of Congreve, he perfectly embodied in his plays all that was most notable in the court of which he was a privileged member. Tedious as its intrigues must commonly have been, they afforded admirable material for comedy, and the Restoration recognised in Wycherley's brilliant prose its own voice perfectly modulated by a master and expounding a theme of its own familiar knowledge. Wycherley's warmest admirers have sometimes, perhaps, overstated the claim that he considered the manners of the time only for the purpose of whipping

them. Impartiality can hardly fail to see that in many of his best scenes he was exploiting those manners for all their comic and salacious value. To fear that anyone may have his morals damaged by seeing *The Country Wife,* for example, is no more absurd than to pretend that he will thereby have his morals elevated. Profligacy, cuckoldry, assignations, the transports and penalties of stolen amours, these were the acknowledged code of the court for which he wrote, and his purpose was to transfigure it all in wit, not to preach a sermon about it. Wycherley was far too sensible of the conditions of favour to point his moral with a heavy hand; also he happened to be a very considerable artist. But, it should be observed, he did not allow the moral to go unpointed altogether. Charles and his followers always enjoyed a jest, and they were not concerned about its delicacy, but they had the real grace never to enjoy it the less if it happened to be turned against themselves. And Wycherley's wit, keeping always strictly within the terms of comic invention, did very often turn it against themselves with startling candour, thereby at once retaining his favour and pointing as much of a moral as needs be. If chastity is as far to seek in his plays as it was in the society that they portray, at least they share with their original a bracing freedom from cant. Here Charles could laugh at his own follies, and he took no offence if sometimes he found himself forced to laugh not too indulgently. He really admired intellect, and

admired it the more for presenting an age so incisively to itself, but Wycherley knew very well that any savagery in the satire would spoil it all. The comedy of as dissolute manners as have ever been affected by fashion was itself the occasion of manners that implied genuine taste and intelligence in both the poet and his royal patron. Charles delighted in extending to genius a license that he believed would not be abused, and Wycherley with perfect tact observed the conditions of his prerogative. And in their personal relations Charles behaved with great generosity. He knew what honour his reign would derive from association with such a man, and was unabashed by the disclosures that such honour might entail. For six years he gave Wycherley every encouragement; when in 1677 the poet was seriously ill Charles sent him to the south of France to convalesce with five hundred pounds in his pocket, and it was only when Wycherley, on the occasion of his secret marriage with Lady Drogheda, slighted the confidence he had so long enjoyed, that the royal favour was withdrawn.

This, then, was the nature of Wycherley's comedy, reflecting a life of which he was cordially and not reluctantly a part. While no man could more searchingly have regarded his age, no man could be said to have been less at odds with it. Material misfortune, loss of Charles's friendship, ill-health, financial difficulties, these things dulled the zest of the ageing poet; but through the prime

of his career he was uncompromisingly of the Restoration, and we have to think of him not as one of its critics in protest, but as one of its most sincerely representative creators. And yet Mr. Montagu Summers, in his masterly edition of Wycherley,[1] can say with justice, "Caught up in the glittering world of Restoration London, petted and fêted, applauded and caressed, we yet find very different traits in his life and work from the traits in the lives and works of Sedley, Etherege, or Buckingham. A keen sincerity informs his every line." It is so. While the society over which Charles II presided was as debauched as the hungriest fanatic could desire, levity of mind and morals is but an element and not the sum of its character. Certain figures do stand out as instances of that levity almost unrelieved; such is Buckingham, such possibly Mr. Summers's other examples. But such decidedly is not Wycherley, nor, as I hope to have shown, is Charles himself. The Wycherley who wrote those verses that have been quoted was in them far below his best as a writer, but he was discovering in himself a strain that was unknown to the masterly impudence of his theatre, and it was a strain that was in Charles also. In Wycherley as a poet it amounted to nothing much, his miscellaneous verses being of small account beside *The Country Wife* and *The Plain Dealer,* but it denoted something in his character, as it did in that of Charles, beyond the scope

[1] Nonesuch Press, 1924.

of a man of really incorrigible levity such as Buckingham. Charles adored his pleasures, and with a remarkable constitution could indulge them without stint; he was, it may be conceded, a slave to his appetites, but he could never wholly escape the graver and and the more comely admonitions of the mind. Statecraft, as practised so ably by Hyde and Ormond and others who were his ministers, bored him, unless he was provoked by a crisis to show that he could at will be the ablest of them all, but his care for art and learning and talent was far from being merely a frivolous one, and, moreover, he was by nature quick to recognise spiritual quality and integrity of character. It was not for nothing that as a boy he had been tutored by Thomas Hobbes, that he had lived through the tragic eclipse of his house, that he had spent fourteen years peddling the continent as an exile, that he had seen Cromwell ascendant over Europe, or that Milton's major works were published in the early years of his reign. Fully occupied though his days, and his nights, may have been, Charles often enough found time to think and a less contemplative mind than his would have found, when he came to the throne at the age of thirty, a great deal to think about. Like nearly all very complex characters, Charles had in him a deep vein of reflective melancholy that for all his frivolity and distaste for business must often have given a strange cast to the pleasures of his own devising. Once more, we are not seeking to im-

pose a virtue upon his disposition, but when Charles is remembered, somewhat inexplicably, as the merry monarch, we shall miss our mark unless we remember also that he was no stranger to a fertile gravity. Dryden we know could be painfully obliging on occasion, but in his ode on Charles's death he had no inducement but truth to write:

> His Conversation, Wit, and Parts,
> His knowledge in the Noblest, useful Arts,
> Were such Dead Authors could not give;
> But habitudes of those who live;
> Who, lighting him, did greater lights receive:
> He drain'd from all, and all they knew;
> His Apprehension quick, his Judgment true:
> That the most Learn'd, with shame confess
> His Knowledge more, his Reading only less. . . .

continuing:

> Amidst the peaceful Triumphs of his Reign
> What wonder if the kindly beams he shed
> Reviv'd the drooping Arts again,
> If Science rais'd her Head.

While making no pretensions to being an arbiter of the arts and learning himself, he was, as with Wycherley, a generous and diligent patron. Among the Sandwich papers is the following unpublished letter to the first Earl from Arlington, which is a charming instance of the care that Charles would take in these matters.

WHITEHALL, *May* 15, 1669.

MY LORD,

Mr. Blome[1] the bearer hereof having desired that his Maj^y^ would recommend a certaine Work of his now neare

[1] Richard Blome, a compiler of geographical and other works.

finished concerning Geography &c to be publicly encouraged: His Majy commanded me to send him to your L'sp with the said Book to be perused and looked into which when you have done if you will please returne me a line or two how you approve of it and how farre you may think it fit to bee encouraged, you will answeare his Majys intentions and oblige

My Lord
Yr Ld'sp's
Most Humble Servant
ARLINGTON.

Evelyn informs us further: he "was a lover of the sea, and skilful in shipping; not affecting other studies, yet he had a laboratory, and knew of many empirical medicines, and the easier mechanical mathematics; he loved planting and building, and brought in a politer way of living," which however, Evelyn adds, "passed to luxury and intolerable expense." Of Charles's personal courtesies there are many records, as will be seen, but our purpose here is to distinguish the liberal attitude that could dignify a mind much given to sordid or trifling pursuits. And Charles in this, as in most things, was honest with himself. He was punctilious about people knowing their proper places, but he was always careful to set a good example by showing that he knew his. Flattery did not interest him, though merit did. "Not affecting other studies," says Evelyn; so far from it, that when a now forgotten author solicited the King's patronage by means of an obsequious dedication, he received the following advice from Hyde:

I must tell you that as there is no Prince this day in Europe who deserves greater commendation, so his modesty is so

predominant over all his virtues, that no gentleman is sooner out of countenance with being overcommended. I have not in my lifetime seen him more displeased, and more angry, than in some few encounters of that kind, and I dare swear he will be put to many blushes on reading your Epistle, and wish some expressions were away . . .

with more to the same effect, and an intimation that in any case Latin would be wasted on a prince that had only the modern tongues. In Hyde's warning is plainly no dissimulation. He knew very well that his master valued such compliments properly paid, but that he was not willing to be made a fool by them. The real satisfaction that Charles derived from these contacts was to see in such a writer as Wycherley the perfect interpreter of the society that he led. Here, his interest told him, was a record that would not fade, and although it was a record that might loosen censorious tongues through the ages, he was content that the truth, even about himself, should be told with so much wit and mettle. This was not mere shamelessness, and certainly not indifference, but genuine intellectual courage. He may not have argued it to himself thus in set terms, but he felt it none the less. And he was gallantly right. To be shocked by the obvious indecencies of Restoration comedy is to be scared by truth. Wycherley showed the court and town of Charles II what they themselves were, and this he shows us too. As we have seen, he sometimes did or aimed at, more than this, and here also Charles could sympathise with him. From Wycherley more perhaps than from

any other writer we know the intimacies of Charles' environment. For event we turn to Pepys and Grammont and Evelyn, but for interpretation to the dramatist. And he tells us that while masques and amorous intrigue and levity in general made heavy claims on Charles's energy, they did not monopolise it.

V

"Money," says Falstaff, "is a good soldier, and will on." The influence of money upon character is a disturbing matter for reflection, and in consequence seldom allowed its due place in the dissertations of the learned. But to neglect it in any estimate of Charles II would be to ignore an essential circumstance. His whole life was passed to an obbligato of debits and credits, with an ascendancy of debits. Even before as a boy he left his father's camp at Oxford he had learnt that royalty commanded no philosopher's stone. When he reached Bristol to take up his first independent command, he found himself a pensioner on any royalist who had a little money in his pocket, and the goodwill to part with some of it. Once his exile had begun he fell into a state, ranging from subsistence on precarious charity to penury, that lasted until 1660. For months on end he was in daily straits for a few shillings, when it was a providential bounty to find a friend so obliging as the one to whom there exists a written promise to repay the loan of a hundred

pounds when the King of England may be able. Charles bore this long economic anxiety with spirit and humour, and through it he acquired a good deal of the worldly wisdom that he never lost. But, as commonly happens to people who are used to uncertain and meagre supplies of money, he also acquired a taste for spending as much of it as he could get. When he came into his kingdom he could realise from his own experience what some trifling amount that he had promised might mean to its recipient, and he could also find the million and more pounds a year that was allotted for the maintenance of the court unequal to an extravagance that he never showed the slightest disposition to curb. His personal lavishness as king was, in truth, of no great consequence in itself, but it created a public feeling that led to endless dissension between himself and Parliament. The fact that the greater part of the court revenue was spent in perfectly legitimate ways was overlooked in the outcry against a certain margin of obvious prodigality. The liberal mood of Parliament was discouraged, and tightening control was placed upon supplies. Three excerpts from the Sandwich correspondence[1] afford evidence of this. Two are taken from Arlington's letters to Sandwich at Madrid.

Jan. 10, 1666.—In our publick affairs there is no alteration since my last, our two money Bills are near a conclusion but wee cannot bee secure of them till they are in our hands, considering the ill humour of the Parliament.

[1] Sandwich MSS.

WHITEHALL, *Nov.* 15, 1666.—The House of Commons sit every day in making the promised money effective but have not yet done it, neither is their temper otherwise so good as we could wish it were. God amend all.

The third is from Clarendon to Sandwich:

Nov. 20, 1666.—I am sure my Lord Arlington gives you as frequent an account of the state of our affairs as is in his power to do, though I doubt he takes no pleasure in it, it not administring yet great delight to us, though in the end I hope all will be well.

Clarendon's hope was not realised in any settled way, the temper of Parliament stiffening as the reign progressed. While, however, we can understand this attitude in men swayed by the scandal of the moment, it is strange to find writers who have the advantage of seeing the matter in perspective sharing a wildly exaggerated view. It is true that we know of large sums, in one case no less than thirty thousand pounds, being paid by Charles to satisfy the rapacity of a mistress; it is true that such a transaction was highly immoral; but it is none the less irresponsible to talk about Charles pouring the national resources into the laps of his courtesans. High-flown indignation about squandering of public money incidentally forgets that once it was voted it was not public money at all, but the King's private money. If he spent some of it for unseemly purposes, that after all was his affair. Deplorable as the occasional abuse of supplies may have been, no one can seriously suggest that it should have been made a pretext for exacting an undertaking from Charles, before it was paid, as

to how he would use his money. This is what Parliament virtually did; with the unfortunate result of inducing the King to favour the very objectionable policy of raising revenue without the assent of Parliament at all, and subsequently to enter into a questionable compact with a foreign court.

Of the habitual disorder of Charles's treasury the following examples are taken from the Sandwich papers. The first is in a letter of 1666 from Arlington to Sandwich, and refers to William Godolphin, who had gone out to join the latter's embassy at Madrid. Arlington is glad that Godolphin is so satisfactory, and proceeds: "I would you had sayd a little to the same effect to Mr. Vice-Chamberlaine, whom we have not been able to prevayle with to this day to pay him the little piece of money assigned to him at his departure." The other is in a letter written a year earlier, also to Sandwich, but by a less exalted personage:

My hoble Good Lord,

According to your Commands I have put in Writing some pticulars of my humble desires.

That whereas his Mattie hath given me order forthwith to make a great Quantity of Arora Coulered Damask, I cannot find by Mr Thomas Townsend that he will take the least notice of it, notwithstanding I have writt and sent often to him concerning the same and now that the King hath pressed a dispatch of the same, for which I ought first to have your honor's order [ ] upon the Lord Chamberlain's Warrant which [ ] he neglects for to call for.

That yor Losp would bee pleased to assign my Certificate of my arrears debt due to Michael: 1663 which was fully settled with all Wardrobe [fees] taken out, as your Honor was hobly pleased to promise me to doo the last spring at your returne.

And as for my serious Complaint that I made to your honor yesterday, concenring the unkind usage of M^{r}. Townsend in not paying of mee as he hath done others since then in settl^{mt} fro: Michael: 1663. In [ ] of that I humbly intreat your honor. That since that time I have not been made worthy by M^{r} Townsend to be a sharer with others of those payments upon that new settlement which I am confident is contrary to y^{r} honor's and His M$^{tie's}$ gratious intentions; That you will be pleased to rectifie that for the time to come, and that you would be hon^{bly} pleased to let me have immediately a line or two concerning the sense of y^{r} hon^{ble} commands to him. That if not money I may have [Tallies] for the soonest paying of me my last bil the which I showed you yesterday which I was promised in 3 months to be paid and now is some two years and better past to my great damage. Else I have no encouragement from M^{r} Townsend, without this lett^{r} of y^{r} Lo^{sp} for me to carrie to him, which will put some life and encouragement in mee the more for to prepare all those things which his Ma^{tie} and y^{r} honor desire, and shall faithfully therein obey all y^{r} commands; and it will give me not only a great deal of interest to serve y^{r} honor, but a great conveniency at this time, and shall ever pray for y^{r} Honor's presperity and happy returne.

EDW. TRUSSELL.

OXFORD, *January* 19, 1665.

VI

It is hoped that the story of Charles's life now to be told may display his character in action, but it seemed necessary first to draw attention to certain aspects of his age and circumstances by which that action was influenced. The doctrine of his divine right challenged by his own very mundane contacts with experience; a religious instinct which he shared with his time, operating in a nature that was greatly inclined to self-indulgence, and one that soon learnt to detest the doctrinal disputes

from which religion seemed to be inseparable; and the less ideal but hardly less powerful impact made by money upon a career of many vicissitudes —these should be borne in mind as we proceed.

CHAPTER II

BOYHOOD

CHAPTER II

Boyhood

I

CHARLES I was thirty years old, and his consort, Henrietta Maria, twenty-one, when their son Charles was born in St. James's Palace on May 29, 1630. An elder son had died at birth the year before. The new baby was, therefore, declared Prince of Wales, and his cradle at once became a centre of controversy, the Roman and the Anglican churches disputing the claims of Lady Roxburgh and Lady Dorset respectively to be the child's governess. At his baptism by Laud on June 27, a compromise was effected by giving him both Catholic and Protestant sponsors.

The occasion was a busy one for the poets, and St. James's was for months profusely garlanded with verse. Henry King, afterwards Bishop of Chichester and a poet of at least one masterpiece, was among the more successful laureates, and he may here do distinguished duty for them all.

BY OCCASION OF THE YOUNG PRINCE
HIS HAPPY BIRTH

At this glad Triumph, when most Poets use
Their quill, I did not bridle up my Muse

For sloth or less devotion. I am one
That can well keep my Holy-dayes at home;
That can the blessings of my King and State
Better in pray'r than poems gratulate;
And in their fortunes bear a loyal part,
Though I no bone-fires light but in my heart.

Truth is, when I receiv'd the first report
Of a new Starre risen and seen at Court;
Though I felt joy enough to give a tongue
Unto a mute, yet duty strook me dumb:
And thus surpriz'd by rumour, at first sight
I held it some allegiance not to write.

For howere Children, unto those that look
Their Pedigree in God's, not the Church book,
Fair pledges are of that eternitie
Which Christians possess not till they die;
Yet they appear view'd in that perspective
Through which we look on men long since alive,
Like succours in a Camp, sent to make good
Their place that last upon the watches stood.
So that in age, or fate, each following birth
Doth set the Parent so much neerer earth:
And by this Grammar we our heirs may call
The smiling Preface to our funerall.

This sadded my soft sense, to think that he
Who now makes Lawes, should by a bold decree
Be summon'd hence to make another room,
And change his Royal Palace for a tomb. . . .

but:

Decay is natures Kalendar; nor can
It hurt the King to think he is a man;
Nor grieve, but comfort him, to hear us say
That his own children must his Scepter sway.
Why slack I then to contribute a vote
Large as the Kingdoms joy, free as my thought?
Long live the Prince, and in that title bear
The world long witness that the King is here:
May he grow up till all that good he reach

Which we can wish, or his Great Father teach:
Let him shine long a mark to Land and Mayn,
Like that bright Spark plac't neerest to *Charles Wayn*,
And like him lead successions golden Teame,
Which may possess the Brittish Diademe.

But in the mean space, let his Royal Sire,
Who warmes our hopes with true Promethean fire,
So long his course in time and glory run,
Till he estates his vertue on his son.
So in his Fathers dayes this happy One
Shall crowned be, yet not usurp the Throne;
And *Charles* reign still, since thus himself will be
Heir to himself through all Posteritie.

Henry King lived to see the Promethean fire quenched, to denounce the regicides in a long philippic dated "From my sad Retirement, March 11, 1648," and to see the restoration of the "new starre" now "risen and seen at Court," in 1660, when he was himself restored to his see, where he lived "the epitome of all honours, virtues and generous nobleness" until his death in 1669.

II

The young prince's parentage was a sufficiently difficult one. History does not afford many examples of greater domestic affection in courts than that which graced the lives of his father and mother, and his early years enjoyed the advantage of genuine parental solicitude. But conjugal virtues alone were an insufficient basis for successful sovereignty when the divine right of kings was a current doctrine, and of the other qualities necessary to that office neither Charles I nor Henrietta

Maria had any vestige. The insecurity of character that was common to the Stuart race was rendered fatal in Charles I by an incurable stupidity. Mary Stuart, James I, Charles II, and James II were all subject to the grosser humours of the family blood, but each of them did something to redress the disability by individual gifts of gallantry, insight, or ability. Charles I, fully endowed with the infirmities of his kind, exacerbated them by a steady futility of judgment. All through his reign he was the despair of such reputable advisers as he had, frustrating their counsels at every turn by conduct as stubborn as it was irresponsible. Of his personal courage at the disastrous end of his life no one can dispute the validity, and we accept Marvell's magnificent testimony that

> He nothing common did, or mean,
> Upon that memorable scene . . .

but it is not to disparage the high spirit with which he faced his dreadful destiny to observe that it was not seldom displayed also by malefactors on their way to Tyburn who had notoriously been poltroons in their lives. And if nothing became Charles I like his end, the end might have been far less intrepid than it was and yet have been notably more respectable than his public life. How he might have behaved in the seclusion of a country manor does not alleviate the fact that he was an unintelligent, overbearing, and corrupt king. The block

has never yet justified itself as an argument about anything, but if ever a monarch owed his state a death it was this one. And while he could be brave enough in a crisis, he had no real fortitude; his desertion of Strafford, the only man by whom his own misguided theories were interpreted with a touch of inspired nobility, was inexcusably base. That from the impenetrable fogs of his self-sufficiency he often meant well we may believe, but he habitually overstepped the mark at which folly becomes criminal. The history of England from 1603 to 1688 is crowded with eminent figures obscure in design, but, with nearly all, the more to investigate them is the less to find ourselves competent to censure. With Charles I this is not so; every reconsideration of his character as a king, in which necessarily his character also as a man is involved, leaves us if possible with a diminished respect. And among the many influences that encouraged his natural obliquity none was more injurious than that of his wife. The sister of Louis XIII of France had, after a somewhat uncertain start, deeply engaged Charles's affections, and by the time their son was born he was slavishly and openly under her control. Her personal life, it would seem, displayed much of the grace and little of the vice of the French court. Her zeal for the Roman Church was genuine, but so entangled with political ambition as to make her alliance with the Protestant throne of England a measure of inexhaustible danger. But private chastity and

spiritual resolution did not mitigate her insatiable appetite for meddling in affairs. In every important decision of his career, Charles deferred to her judgment, which was consistently guided by the interests of her church, and never by those of the English people. And he made no attempt to confine his deference within the bounds of decent privacy; he advertised it in the eyes of his court and the people. Men with serious representation of policy to make to the King had to study the Queen's inclinations, and petty ambition learnt to regard her as peddler-in-chief of royal favours. The popular voice, provoked by this straining of privilege, unjustly, no doubt, but not irrationally, associated her with many intrigues of a questionable nature, and it was an attack upon the Queen's discretion that cost William Prynne his ears under sentence of the Star Chamber. If Charles was a menace to his people through a total want of understanding, Henrietta Maria with a far more agile mind always regarded them with conscious insolence. Anything that was wanting in Charles's own disposition to fit him for the pitiable ruin of his life was abundantly supplied by the woman whom he devotedly loved. There were, indeed, dangerous currents running through the veins of the infant prince.

III

On leaving the nursery, where his chief affection had been for a large "wooden billet, without which

in his arms he would never go abroad or lie down in his bed," Charles, at the age of eight, was given into the tutorial charge of William Cavendish, Earl of Newcastle, later to be one of the Royalist generals who, however, was "amorous of poetry and music" and given to indulging his taste for the politer arts at the expense of martial ardours. But he was an honourable, well-informed, rather fantastic aristocrat of the Elizabethan temper, though he was still under forty, and of great social prestige, Clarendon's "very fine gentleman." His duties were shared by Brian Duppa, afterwards Bishop of Salisbury, and both men gained the affectionate respect of their pupil. Newcastle's advice to the young Prince was full of a humorous worldly wisdom, unstained by cynicism. "I would rather have you study things than words, matter than language. . . . I would not have you too studious, for too much contemplation spoils action, and virtue consists in that. . . ." He recommends the study of the best histories, "so you might compare the dead with the living; for the same humors is now as was then, there is no alteration but in names." The Prince is to be "courteous and civil to everybody . . . to speak well of everybody, and when you hear people speak ill of others, reprehend them. . . ." To women he "cannot be too civil, especially to great ones." He is to reflect upon mortality, but by no means to have "a death's head set always before him." And he is to cultivate something of the arts, but to "take heed of

too much book." Newcastle gave up his charge to another at the end of three years, and if it may be questioned how far the boy of ten had been edified by these shrewd counsels, they were notably in accord with the best that was later to be discovered in the grown man. Of Charles's affection for his tutor the following note, written during Newcastle's guardianship, gives a suggestion not without some characteristic humor:

My Lord,

I would not have you take too much Phisick; for it doth alwaies make me worse, & I think it will do the like with you. I ride every day, and am ready to follow any other directions from you. Make hast to returne to him that love you.

Charles P.

It may be noted that this letter, taken from the Life affixed to the Grammont Memoirs, is given in facsimile by Mr. Osmond Airy in his Goupil volume, and shows a handwriting of remarkable beauty for a child of little more than eight.

Charles, Prince of Wales, K. G., at the age of eleven had occasion to ponder the fortunes of his father's house. Always from his mother he had learnt how kings were answerable to God—her especial God—alone, and how the whole duty of subjects was docility. The one made known his will, the others obeyed, and that was all the theory of kingship that it was necessary for a royal heir to acquire. But now, tested in practice, the theory seemed strangely insufficient. Early in April 1641 the boy knew that his father's dear friend

the Earl of Strafford was on trial for his life. On the 15th, Evelyn writes in his diary:

> I repaired to London to hear and see the famous trial of the Earl of Strafford, Lord-Deputy of Ireland, who, on the 22nd of March, had been summoned before both Houses of Parliament, and now appeared in Westminster-hall, which was prepared with scaffolds for the Lords and Commons, who, together with the King, Queen, Prince and flower of the noblesse, were spectators and auditors of the greatest malice and greatest innocency that ever met before so illustrious an assembly.

Although the result of these proceedings was to make condemnation inevitable, sentence was not actually pronounced until May 8. In the meantime, on April 27, William Prince of Orange had arrived at court "with a splendid equipage to make love to his Majesty's eldest daughter," who was Mary, Princess Royal, a year younger than her brother Charles, and was to become the mother of William the Third of England. Through the days when the Lords were passing the Bill of Attainder sealing Strafford's fate, the court was engaged in a splendour of festivity attending the royal nuptials. By every code of honour the King was pledged to save his servant's life by putting his veto on the Bill and facing whatever consequences might come of public clamour. He failed to do so, and on May 10 gave his consent to the execution almost at the hour when his daughter's marriage was being solemnized. The next day the King, being troubled in his conscience, as he very well might be, sent a letter of appeal to the

Lords, that he must have known would fail in what his absolute veto alone could accomplish, and it was delivered by the hand of the young Prince, who went straight from the scene of revelry to an assembly of grave and harassed faces. Knowing what his errand was, he could not fail to discover that it had been a vain one, and that this royal prerogative of which he had heard so much was powerless to help a great minister of the Crown in his extremity. And on the following day, May 12, Evelyn saw "on Tower-hill that fatal stroke which severed the wisest head in England from the shoulders of the Earl of Strafford," and lamentably added to his notes, "with what reluctancy the King signed the execution, he has sufficiently expressed." Domestic concord must have been curiously contrasted in the boy's mind with his first experience of his father's public authority.

IV

In 1645 the King left London under the low and heavy cloud of civil war. Parliament tried to keep his son in its power, but the diplomacy of Hyde prevented this, and on October 22 Charles was present, nominally as a captain of horse, at Edgehill, his guardian on that day being no less a person than Dr. Harvey, who discovered the circulation of the blood, and who now at the age of sixty-four retired with his charges—James Duke of York being present also—to the shelter of a hedge on a hill-side, and taking a book from

his pocket pursued his studies while the first battle of the war raged on the Plain below. A cannon ball falling in the midst of the strange little party, it was deemed prudent to places the two boys in less mundane care, and Hyde took over the charge. But he, though less Olympian than Harvey, was no more of a soldier, and succeeded in mistaking a parliamentary troop for friends, escaping only through deft work performed by one of the equerries with a pole-axe. After which Charles and his brother were removed from the field altogether, as the action was drifting indecisively into the twilight. During the day impressions had been made on two men that were to have an incalculable effect on the fortunes of the coming years. Captain Cromwell, aged forty-three, leading his troop of horse under Essex, the parliamentary commander, told himself that an army must be raised up of a new spirit in this matter from which resolution the Ironsides came into being. And Prince Rupert, aged twenty-three, flushed by the tactical success of a spectacular cavalry charge and indifferent to strategic rashness, was persuaded that a few dashing onsets, directed by himself in consultation with no one, would drive the rebels into their holes.

A month later the King, having marched on London in the hope of some accommodation with Parliament, only to find himself opposed by a steadily hardening temper, withdrew into winter quarters at Oxford, where he was established at

St. John's College. There for some eighteen months the Prince remained with the court, now under the tutorship of an Earl of Berkshire so inconsiderable as to be released when taken prisoner by the Parliamentarians on the score that he could in any case do them no harm. For some time the advantage swung to and fro between the armies, but under Cromwell's guiding force a rapidly growing discipline was informing the one while the officers of the other worked with less and less cohesion, Rupert, sheltered from reprimand by his uncle the King, continually making discipline impossible. Minor actions were fought, each side claiming its successes, each losing many valiant friends. Sidney Godolphin, Suckling's "little Cid," an illustrious if little-known poet, Sir Bevil Grenville, the pride of Cornish chivalry, Lucius Cary Lord Falkland, were among those who fell in these early months for the King, while among the parliamentary losses none was more grievous than that of John Hampden. But the great carnage of devoted Englishmen of all persuasions and in all ranks of life had not yet begun. It was not until July 2, 1644, that the King, engaged on a recruiting campaign in the west midlands, was moving on from a small victory at Cropredy Bridge in Northamptonshire, only to be met with the news of the overwhelming disaster that had befallen him two hundred miles north at Marston Moor. Rupert's overbearing impetuosity had been a principal factor in a reverse that was

this time on a calamitous scale, and had incidentally caused the Earl of Newcastle, who was in command of the Royalists, to throw up his commission in protest against a disregard of his orders, for which he knew he could expect no redress from the King. Rupert has come down through romantic history as an epitome of cavalier gallantry, but there is in fact little doubt that no man did greater damage to the royalist arms in the field than he. Certain it is that had it not been for his senseless audacity Cromwell would not have been able to write of the flower of the King's army after Marston Moor that "God made them as stubble to our swords."

The Prince was present at Cropredy Bridge, and with his father when the news of Marston Moor was brought in. He saw a further succession of skirmishing, and if he was in no major actions he learnt as a boy of fourteen what it was to endure the hardships of a campaign lasting several months. From November 1644 he was again at Oxford for the early part of the winter, and in March of the following year his father, "thinking to unboy him by putting him into some action and acquaintance with business out of his sight," appointed him generalissimo of all the royal forces in England, and sent him to make his headquarters at Bristol with his own Council. This consisted of the Duke of Richmond and Lennox, a noble whose contempt for popular rights was unbounded; the Earl of Southampton, whose taste

for seclusion had not prevented him from working ceaselessly but unavailingly as a public servant in the cause of peace, and who was to become Lord High Treasurer at the Restoration; Lord Capel, a Hertfordshire squire, a brave and devoted soldier who was to suffer final retribution at the hands of Parliament in 1649, and of whom Hyde wrote that thereafter no man could think himself undervalued, "when he shall hear that his courage, virtue, and fidelity is . . . compared to that of the Lord Capel;" Lord Hopton, who as a member of the Commons had been deputed to present the Grand Remonstrance to the King at Hampton Court, but had joined the Royalists when the open division came; the Earl of Berkshire; Lord Colepeper, whom Hyde had in 1643 succeeded as Chancellor of the Exchequer; and Hyde himself. Hopton was a man of forty-seven, the others between thirty and forty; with the exception of Hyde, of whom we shall hear much, they will not be conspicuous in our story.[1]

V

On March 4, 1645, the Prince and his suite set out from Oxford, and neither Hyde nor his new master was ever to see the King again. Already on every hand was to be found evidence of the declining royal fortunes. Quarrelsome leaders, mutinous troops, defaulting debtors and pressing

[1] Richmond and Southampton, although appointed to the Council, did not move with the Prince to Bristol.

creditors, were all alike deeply depressed by the misgiving that daily gathered force in the King's party as the power, efficiency, and determination of the Parliament became more and more apparent. Arrived at Bristol the Prince found neither organisation nor resources; promised subsidies were withheld, and he had to borrow from Hopton for the provision of present necessities. Of personal loyalty there were still to be found many and noble examples, but the spirit of the cause as a whole was drooping in a dejection that no individual resolution could arrest. Fairfax in the west was winning ground on every hand, and though a dispatch would now and again bring comfortable tidings to the Prince and his councillors at Bristol, no advantage was anywhere gained that could fortify their courage against the news that came in June from Naseby, where the Cavalier army was even more decisively routed than it had been at Marston Moor. It was now only a question of what to do in defeat. The Prince, who already at fifteen was showing that aptitude in affairs that he was later in life so unwilling to exercise, was driven point by point into the southwest corner of England, not without successes in the field, but always harassed by political necessity and increasing pressure from parliamentary arms throughout the country. In September Rupert surrendered Bristol in circumstances that at length cost him his royal uncle's favour, though Charles's favour was by now but

a poor man's portion. It was clear that if the Prince was to remain in England it must be as a prisoner, and the decision had to be made as to where he should begin his exile.

The choice was vexed by a long intricacy of political intrigue. Henrietta Maria was now at the French court, more intimately than ever under the influence of Mazarin and Rome. Her view of the position in England was this. If the King were brought to judgment while his son was under the protection of France, Parliament would be the less likely to proceed to extremities in that there would still be the constant threat of royalist movements in favour of the young Prince Charles. She, and with her Mazarin and the Catholic party, would therefore in some sense be able to regard the young Prince, once he was in their hands, as a hostage for the purpose of making terms with the English Parliament. The terms, it was intended, should ensure the King's safety, but they would by no means overlook the interests of Catholicism. The King himself was alive to the necessity of keeping his heir out of the hands of Parliament, and the Queen's influence with her husband made him accept the idea of French protection without question. The King therefore wrote to Hyde late in 1646, urging at once that he should get the Prince out of England with all possible speed, and that Paris should be their destination. Hyde was prepared to act on the first part of his instructions, but the thought of accept-

ing patronage from France was against his most deeply rooted instincts. He believed that to do so would be to burden future policy with very dangerous obligations; further, he was quick to see the Queen's hand in the proposal, and he knew what it meant. The Anglican Church was, perhaps, Hyde's dearest passion. At his first interview with the King in 1641, he had professed absolute loyalty with the reservation that if his Majesty "had commanded him to have withdrawn his affection and reverence for the Church, he would not have obeyed him," and of all the patrons of his early career, none so fully engrossed his admiration as Laud. Though he may not have wholly shared the Archbishop's temporal ambitions for the Church, he was convinced that the Anglican establishment was an essential part of the English Constitution, and in this faith he was prepared to make no compromise. Without asking whether or no this was a true inspiration, we cannot but recognise that, apart from his own spiritual satisfaction, it was a principle that stiffened Hyde's policy throughout his life. And now he realised that to consent to Henrietta Maria's design would be to encourage the power that he most feared. He therefore opposed it in plain terms. He suggested that Scotland or Ireland might serve their purpose, but in February 1646 the last resistance of the Royalists was broken and immediate action became necessary. The nearest refuge had to be chosen, and on March

4 the Prince landed at St. Mary's in the Scilly Islands, a territory not under the jurisdiction of Parliament. And, apart from his Scotch adventure terminating in the flight from Worcester in 1651, he took no further active part in the history of his country for fourteen years.

CHAPTER III

EXILE: THE FIRST PHASE

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Exile: The First Phase

I

CHARLES was by now prematurely a grown man. Hardened by physical endurance, instructed by the practice of affairs in which he had been more than a figurehead, disillusioned by the disasters and treacheries by which his cause had suffered, it was no sheltered princeling who reached Scilly in a state of destitution on that March afternoon of 1646. Nor was he anything at this age that belied his later years. Hyde, who was a secure moralist, was continually exercised in somewhat futile efforts to keep his mettlesome young charge in order. Already at Bridgewater, where they had been for a time on the western campaign, there had been scenes. The governor was a Colonel Windham, whose wife had been Charles's nurse in his infancy. This lady assumed the privilege of presiding over the young Prince's entertainment in the town, greatly to Hyde's embarrassment and to interference with business. She found a ready ally in the Earl of Berkshire, and so outrageous did her pretensions and those of her confederates become that the Council took

Charles off in a hurry back to Bristol. Before this, indeed, his father had observed in him signs of a disposition that had shocked his one genuine susceptibility; he had in fact felt himself obliged to box his son's ears for flirting during service at St. Mary's church in Oxford.

For six weeks Charles and his court, augmented daily by fugitives from England, led an existence of improverished boredom in Scilly. Appeals to Henrietta Maria for assistance brought an inadequate supply of provisions, but no more, and the island itself had no hospitality to offer. Moreover, cruisers from the parliamentary fleet were paying dangerous attentions to the place, and a movement to other quarters became imperative both for comfort and security. Jersey was suggested, and, after some opposition from Hyde on account of its proximity to France, finally adopted as the new point of settlement. In the middle of April, in three small boats that made the passage in constant danger of capture, Charles landed with a retinue that had by now increased to the number of three hundred, and took up his residence at Elizabeth Castle, situated off the main island. Jersey received him with eager demonstrations of loyalty, and, much to his relief, with substantial presents of money. In public Charles conducted himself to Hyde's entire satisfaction, observing all the graces of ceremony, behaving with becoming decorum in church, and even "admitting the loyal islanders to see him when he dined in state." But,

beyond this display of formal virtue that so pleased the austere young Chancellor of the Exchequer, he was already exercising the gift for endearing himself to popular feeling that never deserted him. What Hyde desired from motives of policy Charles himself performed by a natural instinct for good-fellowship. He was, perhaps, the only Stuart who really liked the people, understood something of their nature, and enjoyed being with them. He, also, could sacrifice obligation to interest, as time was to prove, but, unless interests were very insistent, he did care to redeem his promises and he cherished the privilege of remembering old friends. During the years of his exile he had no favours to bestow for services done, but pledges against a better time if it should come, and it is notably to his credit that after his restoration, when he might easily and conveniently have forgotten these, he was never reminded of them in vain. Among the Sandwich papers is a long series of letters written by Arlington, the Secretary of State, to the first Lord Sandwich, while he was ambassador at Madrid, and in December, 1666 we find an attractive recollection of these Jersey days. At the end of a long official document Arlington writes, "His Maj^{ty} recomends to your Ex^{cy} the getting out of the Inquisition of Valladolid a poor Jersey man that is put in there for some small indiscretion as it is represented to us"; on the 13th he returns to the subject and adds that the victim's name is Jean de Maisere.

Charles's private occupations in Jersey were less to Hyde's liking. It is true that much of his time was spent in sailing a new yacht that he had had built in St. Malo, but the Council soon learnt that to run away from Mrs. Windham at Bridgewater was decidedly to live to fight another day. It is clear that at the age of sixteen Charles was fixed on the indulgence of those pleasures that posterity has so discreetly censured. When he returned to England as king, his amours had a political and national significance that cannot be overlooked, but during his continental exile, while they were a constant preoccupation of his own, they have, with some exceptions to be noted, but a variable interest for others. Before he left Jersey in July 1646, the first of his many children had been born, a son whom he acknowledged twenty years later in London. Who the mother was is not known, but from Charles's designation of her as "a young lady who was amongst the most distinguished in our Kingdom" it is probable that she was a member of some family at his court. It is pointless to plead the licence of the times in excuse of a code that in this range of morals we have to accept as being adopted by Charles without question from the first, and professed without remorse or misgiving until the end. He neither delighted in nor was ashamed of the notoriety that in this respect attended his life; he was kind, often far too kind, to his mistresses, and that there were many of them did not occur to him as being to his credit or other-

wise. This must always be remembered about Charles, neither in condonation nor censure, that promiscuous as his pleasures were, he did not seek to evade their responsibilities by secret drabbing, a circumstance to which not a few of our noble houses owe their origin. Scandalous or not as this may be, it was a condition of his character and conduct, and it is well to recognise it as such. And at the same time we may allow the fairness of Hyde's biographer [1] when he remarks, "It says much for Charles, and not less for Hyde, that a tutelage borne and exercised amidst such untoward circumstances did not break down the barriers of respect or of affection between the two."

Hyde's apprehension as to the strategic dangers of Jersey were well founded. No sooner had the fugitives arrived there than the designs of Henrietta Maria and Mazarin became apparent. It was hinted that Jersey was an unsafe refuge, and promises were made of lavish entertainment if Charles would accept the hospitality of France. Hyde, whose observation was as alert as anyone's, could detect no signs of danger in their present asylum, and he had no faith whatever in promises from that quarter. He knew that Mazarin was devoid of scruples in his diplomacy, and he knew that the Queen's ambitions were flattered by advisers who were an offence to all the finer spirits of their own party. Her chief secretary was

[1] Sir Henry Craik; though did Sir Henry mean exactly "break down the barriers"?

Henry Jermyn, who in 1660 was created Earl of St. Albans, and of whom there is little on record in his favour.

> Paint then St. Albans full of soup and gold,
> The new Court's pattern, stallion of the old;
> Him neither wit nor courage did exalt,
> But Fortune chose him for her pleasure's salt.
> Paint him with drayman's shoulders, butcher's mien,
> Membered like mule, with elephantine chin.
> Well he the title of St. Albans bore,
> For never Bacon studied nature more;
> But age, allaying now that youthful heat,
> Fits him in France to play at cards, and treat. . . .[1]

Marvell's opinion may have been inflamed by party passion, and may, perhaps, no more than set off the passage in the posthumous introduction to Cowley's poems where the writer says: "a little before his death he communicated to me his resolutions to have dedicated them all [his works] to my Lord St. Albans, as a testimony of his entire respects to him. . . . I therefore here presume to make a present of them to his Lordship. . . . And I am confident his Lordship will believe it to be no injury to his Fame, that in these Papers my Lord St. Albans and Mr. Cowley's name shall be read together by posterity." No indeed; though Cowley's respect had been purchased at a pretty handsome price in the shape of a "plentiful estate," which, whether or not it came out of Jermyn's pocket, was a very good thing to give to a poet. Pepys, after recording his first meeting

[1] Andrew Marvell, *Last Instructions to a Painter.*

in 1660, when St. Albans "seemed to be a fine civil gentleman," makes guarded references throughout his diary to a man whose influence at court called for some discretion even in cipher. Grammont speaks of him with contempt, Evelyn usually with formal civility, though with scarcely veiled disapproval when on September 18, 1663, he notes in his diary: "met my Lord St. Albans, now grown so blind that he could not see to take his meat. He has lived a most easy life, in plenty even abroad, whilst his Majesty was a sufferer; he has lost immense sums at play, which yet at about eighty years old, he continues, having one that sits by him to name the spots on the cards. He eat and drank with extraordinary appetite. He is a prudent old courtier, and much enriched since his Majesty's return." He was generally reported at the time of the Restoration to have married Henrietta Maria, Pepys believing the rumor and one witness, Madame Vaviere, writing, "Charles the First's widow made a clandestine marriage with her chevalier d'honneur, Lord St. Albans, who treated her extremely ill, so that, whilst she had not a faggot to warm herself, he had in his apartment a good fire and a sumptious table. He never gave the Queen a kind word, and when she spoke to him he used to say *Que me veut cette femme?*" Marvell's description, if malicious, has the stamp of truth on it, and is reinforced by Evelyn. Henry Jermyn must have been anathema to Hyde, and none the less so for the errand upon which he

arrived in Jersey in June 1646, armed not only with specious arguments from France, but with the far more difficult evidence of the King's explicit commands that the Prince should go forthwith to Paris.[1] The Council was hotly divided in its views, but the party led by Hyde, resisting to the last, was overruled by Charles himself, who was seduced by the prospects of privileged gaiety at the French court. By the end of the month Charles had departed from Jersey, and within a fortnight he was bitterly disillusioned as to the consideration that he was to receive.

Hyde refused to accompany his charge on a venture of which he was profoundly suspicious. The King had by now placed himself in the hands of the Scots, with consequences that it is not for this story to relate. Hyde wrote to him, explaining that under orders he had relinquished the Prince to guardians whom he distrusted, and that he conceived his duty in that respect to be now at an end. Assuring his master of his continued and devoted loyalty, he asked to be bidden to any service that might be possible. But Charles I was now beyond the succor of his servants. Two years and a half were to pass before his tragedy came to its close, but during that time he was moving helplessly towards the inexorable end.

[1] It should be noted that Mazarin was careful not to let it seem that he was sending invitations to the Prince. The official theme was the natural affection of Henrietta Maria for her son. While everyone knew that Mazarin was a promoter of the design, the Cardinal wanted to be under no personal obligations to Charles if he should turn up.

To his honour it should be said that all attempts by France to buy him in the Catholic interests[1] were steadfastly dismissed, even when urged by a Queen who could see nothing but folly in sacrifice for so slight a thing as the Anglican Church. The King probably knew that France in any case could not help him, but in standing for that one loyalty he exacted from Hyde the last measure of admiration.

II

A few weeks after his arrival in Paris, Charles was joined by Rupert, who found his cousin in a miserable enough way. The Prince learnt at once that he was to be on the terms of a pensioner, with neither means nor freedom. Hyde's estimate of Mazarin's promises was, he found, more than justified. Moreover, he was treated as a child by his mother, which did not flatter the self-reliance for which he had paid dearly in the past year. In consenting to Charles's removal to France his father had stipulated that his religious instruction should be in the hands of his old tutor Brian Duppa, now Bishop of Salisbury, who, however, seems to have been replaced by a Dr. Steward, also of the King's choosing. Commands on this point were too explicit to be disobeyed, but otherwise the Queen was to have complete authority over

[1] Not always directly. Sometimes he was begged to make capital concessions to the Presbyterians. What Mazarin wanted was rather Charles's repudiation of the English Church than his allegiance to the Roman.

her son. And complete authority was the last thing under which, by this time, Charles wished to find himself. "He was," says Hyde, "governed by his mother with such strictness, that though his highness was above the age of seventeen, he never put his hat on before the Queen, or had above ten pistoles in his pocket." Henrietta Maria took charge of the allowance made by the French court for her son's maintenance, and ordered his movements with close supervision. How Charles chafed under this control we can imagine, and Jermyn's authority would make matters no pleasanter. It was at this time that Thomas Hobbes, now nearly sixty years old, was engaged to instruct him in mathematics, and, remembering Evelyn's testimony to Charles's taste for such studies, the two hours a day spent in this exercise may well have been among the least tiresome of his employment. After a time Hobbes, being suspected of holding atheistical opinions, lost his place, but Charles always retained his affection for his old tutor, and when some years after the Restoration the wilder sort of bishops were for having the octogenarian philosopher burnt for his heresies, Charles startled the courtiers who were attending him on an airing by walking across the road to raise his hat to the discredited old man.

But mathematics were a recreation that needed lighter contrasts, and these Charles was not slow to find. His mother, strict as she was, did not discourage his gallantries, and here again we may

see Jermyn's influence. Charles's boon companion in these pursuits was George Villiers, the second Duke of Buckingham two years older than his master. The boys had been tutored together as children, and although Charles was too astute to allow his friend to acquire the political ascendancy that had been so fatally exercised by the elder Buckingham on James I and Charles I, he found in him a ready and accomplished partner in license. Of Buckingham himself more will be told later; of the young Prince's philanderings conducted in the congenial atmosphere of the court of Louis XIV no account seems necessary.

Charles's lighter diversions were, however, to some extent regulated by more serious affairs. Matrimonial projects with the houses of Spain and Orange had already been considered and dismissed, and his mother now favoured Mademoiselle de Montpensier, daughter of the Duke of Orleans and cousin of the French King, as a prospective daughter-in-law. Charles and the Grand Mademoiselle indulged in a pretence of courtship that was cramped by the circumstance that neither understood the other's language. Henrietta Maria found the spectacle edifying, but no one else supposed that her design would come to anything. Mazarin, whose dispensation on such matters was absolute, did not mean one of the greatest fortunes of France to be appropriated by the penniless heir to a kingdom which it was doubtful that he would ever inherit, and in this

resolution he was seconded by the lady herself. Nor was Charles anxious for success in his suit, but Mademoiselle's weath and beauty, even if her wit escaped him, were obvious recommendations, and had she and Mazarin been willing it is probable that the match would have been made. Another proposal made by or submitted to Charles was that he should marry Hortense Mancini, the lovely niece of Mazarin himself, but again the Cardinal refused his sanction. A little later suggestions were made to the Princess Dowager of Orange in favour of her daughter Henrietta, but she also shared Mazarin's views. It is consoling to know that at the Restoration both Cardinal and Dowager showed an eager disposition to change their minds, and were civilly informed that they need not trouble to do so.

The political intrigues that preceded the execution of the King in England call for a bare summary. It soon became apparent even to those Royalists who, unlike Hyde, had put some faith in French assistance that Mazarin would do nothing to endanger his relations with the Parliament that was daily growing in power. Henrietta Maria realised that the only hope for the recovery of her husband's fortunes lay with the Scotch Presbyterians, whose patronage meant nothing less than submission to the Covenant. To the Queen a Presbyterian was neither better nor worse than an Anglican, but to Hyde the project was as distasteful as could be. On the other hand, his

immediate ambition was to get the Prince away from France, and any pretext for doing this was better than none. When, therefore, strong representations came from the Covenanters urging the Prince to take up the leadership himself of the royalist cause in Scotland, Hyde saw, in assenting to something he liked little, his opportunity of ending a situation that he liked less, and Mazarin, reluctant as he was to part with so useful a political hostage, could devise no plausible reason for refusing Charles permission to leave. In the middle of 1648 Charles arrived in Holland, and began preparations for the Scotch expedition.

III

At Helvoetsluys he found a fleet of ships that had revolted from the Parliament, under the command of his brother James. The Duke of York had recently escaped from England, disguised as a girl, having been in the hands of the Parliament since the fall of Oxford two years earlier. Whatever talent for naval administration he may have shown later, he was now, at fifteen, wholly incapable of handling the disorganised crews, and Charles placed the effective control of the fleet in the hands of Lord Willoughby of Parham, a Parliamentarian who had joined the Presbyterian revolt against the army. As discipline was being restored, Prince Rupert, we are told by Hyde, "suffered two or three mutinies, in one of which he had been compelled to throw two or three seamen

overboard by the strength of his own arms." At the end of July, with scant provisions and no settled plans, the little company of ten ships put to sea, and in August Charles met the Scotch commissioners, led by John Maitland, Earl of Lauderdale, in the Downs. The negotiations were inconclusive. Lauderdale did not represent the extreme covenanting party, and tidings being received of fresh disasters in England to the royalist faction of which he was an adherent, it was decided that since for Charles to go to Scotland at the moment would be to place himself at the dictates of Argyll and the Covenant, the prudent course was to put back into Holland and wait. As they were preparing to do this, the parliamentary fleet came up, and preparations, in which Charles behaved with vigor and authority, were made for action. What would almost certainly have been a disaster for his party was, however, averted by a storm, and by September Charles and his court were established at the Hague under the protection of his sister Mary and her husband the Prince of Orange.

Here the Scotch negotiations were continued. Hyde, who now rejoined the Prince in a state of destitution after a collision with pirates in the English Channel, had lost what little enthusiasm he ever had for alliance with either Lauderdale or Argyll or both. He had no more mind now for sending Charles to Scotland than he had to see him stay in France. But, in truth, he was day by day more tragically persuaded that it would matter

very little for a long time, if ever again, what the royalist policy should be. The King's cause in England was by now ruined beyond recovery, and already men were preparing themselves for the last scene. His son, with full realisation of the impending tragedy suddenly upon him, made a desperate and pathetic throw to stave off the last dreadful measure of disaster. He sent a blank sheet of paper to the Parliament, bearing his signature at the foot, and bade them inscribe upon it what terms they would in exchange for the King's life. It was put aside unheeded, and may still be seen, eloquent in its dumb appeal, in the British Museum. It is here reproduced in facsimile. On February 5, 1649, news reached Charles of the event that Evelyn recorded in his diary thus: "The villany of the rebels proceeding now so far as to try, condemn and murder our excellent King on the 30th of this month [January], struck me with such horror, that I kept the day of his martyrdom as a fast, and would not be present at that execrable wickedness." And at the same time, James Graham, Marquis of Montrose, on receiving the intelligence at Brussels, fell down in a swoon.

IV

The story of Montrose does not belong to this occasion, but its end has been a dark cloud on Charles's name, and must be considered here. In the light of history no conviction that he defended

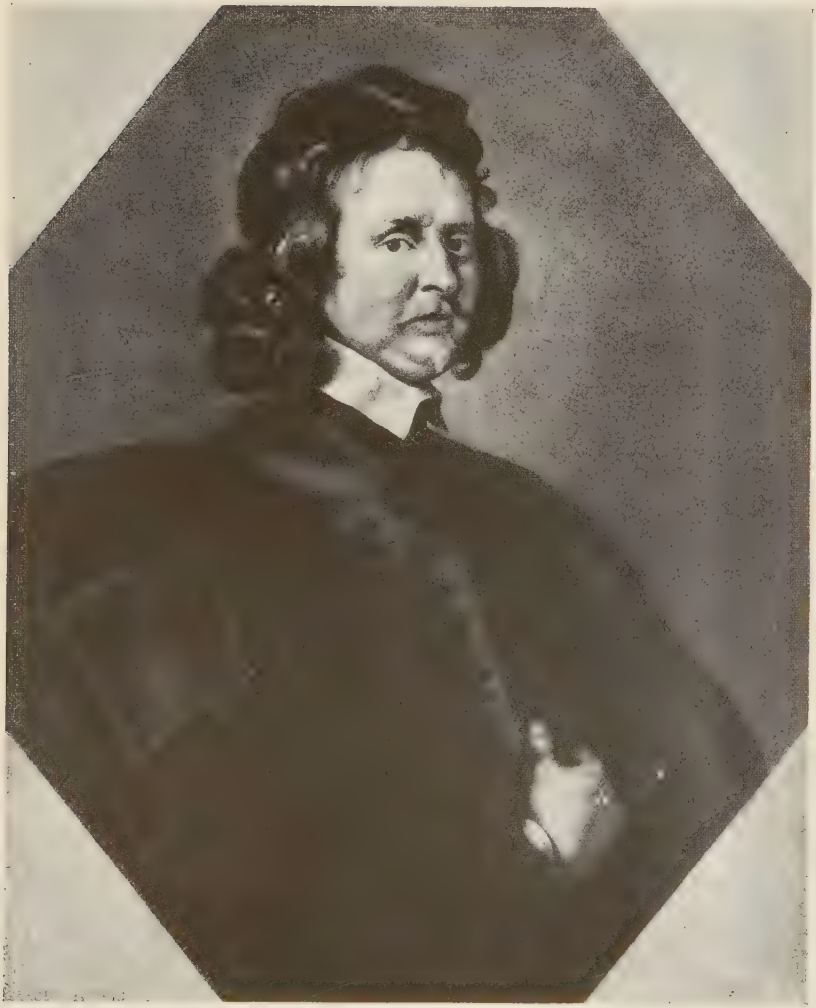
a bad cause can impair our admiration for that great and gallant man. Incorruptible in devotion, fearless in service, a superb strategist and a dreaded opponent in the field, of a chivalry that no insults could betray, a scholar and a poet, he embodies in a figure of unsullied dignity all the finer parts that have given the Cavaliers their abiding appeal. In 1646, when the possibility of further success in arms had gone, and the King was virtually a prisoner with the Scots, Montrose was ordered by his master leave the country and wait upon events in France. He obeyed as was his custom, and for two years wandered about the continent soliciting help for the King's cause. Now when the news came that ended all his hopes, he exclaimed that life had for him no further employment. His chaplain, George Wishart, reminded him that there was a new King, in whose service the destruction of the old might be avenged. Montrose braced himself, and in Wishart's presence solemnly avowed the double purpose of "avenging the death of the royal martyr, and re-establishing his son upon his father's throne." And thereupon he offered his service unconditionally to Charles at the Hague.

Charles knew what the offer from such a man meant, but it was none the less one attended by considerable difficulties. Montrose, in his long campaigns, had made inveterate enemies of Argyll and Lauderdale, the very men on whom Charles was building what hopes he had left. Argyll, for

the moment, was not in the picture, but Lauderdale, who was negotiating at the Hague in March 1649, was insistent in the demand that any compact must rest in the first place on absolute repudiation of the infamous James Graham. Hyde knew very well that Lauderdale's high-flown expressionswere inspired by personal animosity, but he knew also that behind them was the momentum of Scotch opinion. Charles had been proclaimed King in Scotland, but he and Hyde knew that the ceremony could be nothing but an empty one unless it was supported by the combined factions of the Covenant, both of which had for years been defied by Montrose. Hyde's biographer may well exclaim upon the folly of men who, seeking alike the restoration of the throne, could not forget their differences and unite in the common cause; but the quarrel between Montrose and his enemies was beyond the hope of reconciliation. And Lauderdale took no pains to conceal his hatred, refusing even to stay in the room if Montrose entered. With Lauderdale now were other commissioners, and deference to the Covenant was made a condition of Charles's return to Whitehall by way of Scotland. The Prince would not commit himself, and after several weeks of argument they could only get a provisional acceptance of their demands. He agreed to subscribe to the Covenant for Scotland only, "the actual meaning of which," as Mr. Osmund Airy explains, "appears in Hyde's paraphrase to the King of Spain—'He deferred the

thought of going himself in person into Scotland, till the affections of that people be reformed or reduced; which he doubts not will shortly be done by the Marquis of Montrose.' " At this moment Charles appointed Montrose Lieutenant-Governor of Scotland, Commander-in-Chief of the Royal Forces, and Ambassador-Extraordinary with powers to enlist what help he could from the courts of northern Europe. The commissioners left the Hague without clearly knowing what had happened, but, in spite of the unsatisfactory termination of their errand, with a good deal of admiration for Charles himself, one of them going so far as to declare that "If God would send him among us, without some of his present counsellors, I think he would make, by God's blessing, as good a king as Britain saw these hundred years." The testimony to Charles's "sweet and courteous disposition" as well as to his gifts was not political discretion, but a genuine acknowledgment of a personality that now, as later, impressed itself without self-opinion. It is not the least of Charles's merits that with all the Stuart sense of what was due to a king, he was really free of personal vanity. Few kings have had greater gifts of address and authority than he, and none has been at less trouble to show them off.

The court at the Hague was now for a time dispersed. The Scotch commissioners returned home; Montrose went off on his embassy; while Hyde and Charles, the former on his way to sound the Spanish court and the latter to investigate the



EDWARD HYDE, EARL OF CLARENDON
(By Gerard Soest)
(National Portrait Gallery)

possibilities of Catholic help in Ireland, found themselves together in France at St. Germain's with Henrietta Maria. The Queen at once attempted to resume her control over her son, but Charles now regarded himself as King of England, and, with due filial respect, begged to be allowed to conduct his own public affairs. The Queen expostulated, she even appealed to Hyde whom she knew to be opposed to all her own schemes; but while an appearance of harmony was restored, she realised that her term of influence was at an end. The imperious mind that had so fatally governed the father had thus early lost its mastery over a son of far greater pliancy, yet stouter fibre. She had been able to coerce the obstinacy of Charles I, but she now found obstinacy succeeded by character, and coercion no longer possible. Charles stayed some months in France, renewing his operatic courtship of Mademoiselle de Montpensier with as little enthusiasm on either side as before. In September, 1649, he croossed to Jersey, and then awaited a favorable opportunity of entering Ireland. In November he heard of Cromwell's devastating campaign in that country, and the project had to be abandoned. Hyde had proceeded on his mission, a futile one, into Spain, and Charles was left without his counsel when the Scotch Kirk, encouraged by the downfall of the King's Irish hopes, renewed its overtures as he was waiting precariously in Jersey.

Since he left the Hague, Charles had heard

that Lucy Walter, commonly and wrongly called Walters, had given birth to a son of whom he was, or reputed to be, the father, and who was to live out a turbulent story as the Duke of Monmouth. Lucy Walter, a girl of Charles's own age, was of a good Welsh royalist family that in her childhood had been dispersed with loss of its property by the parliamentary forces, and she had drifted about in miscellaneous company under the equivocal protection of a Colonel Sidney until she went to Holland, where she became the mistress of the Prince of Wales during the interval between his arrival and his expedition with the fleet. She followed him to France, as we learn from Evelyn's note of August 18, 1649: "I went to St. Germain's to kiss his Majesty's hand; in the coach which was my Lord Wilmot's, went Mrs. Barlow [the name taken by Lucy] the king's mistress, and mother to the Duke of Monmouth, a brown, beautiful, bold, but insipid creature." Her insipidity may have been a discretion for Evelyn's benefit. Some doubts have been thrown upon Charles's paternity of her son, but he must best have known with what reason it was acknowledged. Two years later Lucy bore him another child, a daughter, and thereafter, her amours becoming notorious, Charles broke off the connection with a pension of four hundred pounds a year, which, in view of the general state of his finances, we cannot too confidently hope she was paid. At the time of the Restoration there was persistent gossip, frequently referred to by Pepys,

to the effect that she was the King's legal wife, but Charles on three occasions formally denied a rumour that nevertheless was for long not wholly discredited.

The Scotch deputies arrived in Jersey to find the King without resources, his prospects of other help cut off, and in a retreat that could at any moment be reduced by the parliamentary ships. Rupert was privateering with the small royal fleet off the Portuguese coast, much to the annoyance of Spain,[1] and in any event he could have made no effective resistance to Blake or any other commonwealth leader in the Channel. Charles was, in fact, helpless, and the Scots pressed their advantage. The Solemn League and Covenant was commended to him in cascades of argument, and at length Charles was convinced that he must either swallow it or abandon the last hope of retrieving his throne. In January 1650 he consented to their proposals, and the drafting of the document known as the Treaty of Breda began, in which the terms of his contract with the Scots were defined, and at this point the reckoning with Montrose had to be made.

The Scots adventure was in effect a forlorn one from the first. Hyde by this time almost certainly realised in his heart that the only hope of Charles's return as King lay in a slow process of changing opinion in England that would take years to pro-

[1] For an excellent account of these activities see Professor Prestage's *Diplomatic Relations of Portugal with France, England and Holland from* 1640 *to* 1668: 1925, p. 111.

duce its effect, if, indeed, it should ever do so. But Hyde very unfortunately was not now with Charles, as we have seen. Whether, if he had been at the conferences in Jersey, he could have prevented, or finally would have wished to prevent, the Scotch enterprise, is doubtful. The argument of desperation was a powerful one, and the doctrine of patience in terms of years not likely to appeal to a spirited boy of twenty. But although Hyde's advice was not available, the appointment of Montrose to the Scotch command had been made with his full consent and approval, and we have seen what he took it to mean. Charles now assured Montrose that, notwithstanding the treaty in process, his commission stood, and desired him to forward the royal cause in Scotland, with or without arms, according to his discretion. Montrose's last campaign, conducted under this authority, was a disaster from first to last, and culminated in his own execution with every circumstance of ferocity in Edinburgh on May 21, 1650. In the meantime, under pressure from the Kirk, Charles had, on May 3, sent orders to Montrose to lay down his arms. They were never received, and historians have agreed, so far as I know without exception, in convicting Charles of a double treachery in sending a devoted servant on a mission that he must have known would bring him to ruin, and in repudiating him once he had done so. But with no desire to mitigate Charles's offence, and least of all to defend any abuse of such

loyalty as exalted a sacrifice that has become one of the splendors of history, I am unable to see the matter as one of simple perfidy. The truth, it seems to me, must have been a good deal more involved than is commonly supposed.

V

When Montrose accepted his commission he knew that Charles was in daily communication with the Covenanters. It is true that upon his appointment the negotiations were suspended, but it was in such a way as to make it possible for them to be reopened at any convenient time, and I know of no evidence to show that Montrose was not further fully aware of this circumstance. It is extremely difficult to understand the reasoning by which at any time Charles, Montrose, and Hyde can have persuaded themselves that a royalist rising under Montrose in Scotland could successfully co-operate with action by the Covenanters, but the fact remains that they did so. Up to the last moment Hyde was sanguine as to its feasibility. "We hope," he wrote from Spain, "the Marquis of Montrose will advance this treaty better than all the devotion of the Presbyterians," thereby showing that to his mind the dual design did not even then seem to be impracticable. There must, we believe, have been some compact between the three men of which we have no record. The betrayal presented to us by tradition, apart from its baseness, would have been so foolhardy, so gross

in its diplomacy, and so utterly without purpose, that not even the intrepidity of Montrose could have made him a prey to it. We are asked to believe that Charles and Hyde said to him in effect, "We are proposing an alliance with men implacably determined on your destruction; go and conduct a campaign that in the event of the alliance being concluded we shall be forced to disown, even though it should meet with some success,[1] and that will deliver you over to vengeance if it fails." It is not credible that such a proposal could either have been made or accepted, and the most probable explanation of a strangely obscure episode is that Montrose, who knew a great deal about Scotland, while Charles and Hyde knew little or nothing, himself suggested that he should go back to his own county, with what forces he could raise, and improvise his plans on arrival. Inflexible as Lauderdale was, Hyde could not believe that his own gift of persuasion might not yet prevail upon him and the Covenanters to regard Montrose as an ally, and the Marquis repeatedly declared his anxiety to let bygones be bygones. There was, then, at the time of Montrose's departure still a possibility, or so they considered, that if the alliance were made it might be on terms by which his forces in Scotland could be joined to those of the Covenant. If this should come about, it was of the utmost importance that he should be on the

[1] In spite of Hyde's words, the wildest hopes could not have supposed that Montrose unaided could restore Charles in disregard of the Covenant.

spot. The risk involved if the hope should not be realised was a capital one, but Montrose in his present mood was eager to engage in rather than to avoid extreme hazards. My surmise is that in undertaking his mission he did so in full realisation of its dangers, for a possible signal advantage, and that he insisted to Charles that if he miscarried the responsibility should be regarded as entirely his own. Reconstructing if we can the problems that confronted these men as they discussed the broken fortunes of their cause at the Hague, such a pledge was not only magnificently in keeping with Montrose's chivalry and present temper, but it was one that Charles could accept without dishonour. It is significant that Hyde in his account of Montrose's defeat and death, speaks always with the deepest and most grateful admiration for his courage and virtue, and nowhere shows the slightest uneasiness that he had been the victim of treachery. Hyde, the chronicler, was a partisan; but he was not a scoundrel, and just as he could by his own standards do justice to the qualities of the King's enemies, he was totally incapable of so knavish a piece of self-deception as to lend himself to a monstrous wickedness and write of the event without a trace of misgiving.

Once he was in Scotland, it is not unlikely that Montrose, hearing no more of the alliance, found inaction beyond the resources of his always impetuous and now greatly excited temper, and was precipitate in his movements. Policy would be

sorely tried by the ardours that would revive as he knew himself to be once more within striking distance of his old enemies; he may even have persuaded himself that after all he could by bold enterprise achieve everything for the King unaided. It was not idly that he had written:

> He either fears his fate too much,
> Or his deserts are small,
> That dares not put it to the touch
> To gain or lose it all.

He advanced from the Orkneys into the mainland, only to find that he had tragically over-estimated his following, and that the country was virtually in a state of hue-and-cry against the man whom the ascendant power hated with the fury of fear, and whom most of his friends dare not support. He was taken on May 4; on the 3rd, Charles had signed the order for his withdrawal from the field, and a week later dissociated himself from Montrose's action. It is in doing this that the last enormity of his betrayal of Montrose is alleged, but it is in doing this that I submit he was acting precisely as Montrose had stipulated. It need hardly be pointed out that, apart from the question of time, Charles was wholly powerless to save Montrose's life. To have refused any further dealings with the executioners of his servant would have been to make a very gallant gesture, it would also have been to destroy the very possibilities for which, in principle, Montrose had died, and, as is highly probable, to have disregarded that great

man's own express desires. Montrose at the end had not heard of Charles's repudiation, but either he was prepared for it or he must have believed that his own defeat was also the defeat of the King. And he was under no illusion; he knew that it was his own debt alone that was now being paid to a pitiless adversary who yet might save the cause for which he perished. His own way had failed; the last distress of his dying hours would have been to think that no other way remained, and he knew that, so far as man could see at that moment, the only other way was in the hands of his destroyers. On the scaffold his words were: "It is spoken of me that I would blame the King. God forbid. . . . For his Majesty now living, never any people, I believe, might be more happy in a King. His commands to me were most just; and I obeyed them. He deals justly with all men. I pray God he be so dealt withal." And to believe that if the letter from Breda had been in his hands Montrose would have felt or spoken otherwise, is to see less than the true tragedy and splendour of his death.

CHAPTER IV

SCOTLAND AND WORCESTER

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I

IT is well to remember that Charles was still but twenty years old. On June 24, 1650, he landed in Scotland, having first sworn to the Covenant. He discovered that, King or no King, he was expected to become little less than the creature of Argyll. It need perhaps not be repeated that the religious pretences of the Covenant, in common with half the sectarian professions of Europe, were a cloak for every kind of political rapacity and bigoted self-interest. To think of Argyll as the champion of a great spiritual movement is grotesque. The ministers who had dishonoured Montrose's dying hours with their obscene taunts and blasphemous pieties now clamoured round the young King in a frenzy of brutal fanaticism. They bawled an interminable succession of interminable sermons at him, they gibbered of humiliation and affliction of the spirit, they bullied him into public shows of repentance, they beat upon their bellies as he was compelled to cry out upon his mother's idolatry and his father's wicked courses, and they declared with uncouth iteration

that the chief office of the King of England was to be a doorkeeper in the Kirk of God's Covenant. The boy assumed what composure he could under these assaults, and privately indulged with Buckingham in ribald derision. The whole venture, ill-advised and fruitless, was in reality little more than a farce, and one to be summarily stopped by Cromwell in less than three months. The censure that has been so freely passed on Charles for his share in it seems curiously heavy-handed. It is true that he was trafficking with doctrines that had been anathema to his father, as they still were to the main body of Royalists; it is also true that in subscribing to them he did so without conviction, indeed with a cynicism that he was careful only to conceal from the hawk-like eyes about him. Again, he was doing all this in disregard of the present interests of some of his friends, Ormond, who led the royalist hopes in Ireland, and Rupert, for example. But what does it all amount to? A boy, with hardly an intimate friend in the world whose counsel in affairs was worth listening to, if we except Hyde; a boy who had picked up his experience under no sort of stable discipline, kicked from pillar to post, continually the witness of petty brawls, jealousies, and intrigues, and himself the centre of a storm as violent as had ever shaken the country of which he was told he was King; accustomed to seeing every kind of iniquity practised in the name of religion, and taught by example that private morality could be as rotten

as you desired so long as political appearances were kept up; bedevilled in season and out by the conflicting arguments of Papists, Anglicans, Presbyterians, and agnostics; a beggar from one court to another, receiving scanty alms that were grudged, and knowing that he could not believe one word in ten that was spoken to him—this boy had drifted through a process of events, from which the wisest heads in Europe might have sought in vain to evolve a coherent policy, into the toils of an utterly unscrupulous band of hell-fire zealots, who wanted to exploit his throne no less than he was seeking to exploit their resources. And we are old that he had shocked the conscience of the devout royalist party, that he had forfeited the confidence and regard of his truest friends, and that in engaging himself in such an enterprise he suffered a deterioration of character from which he never recovered. All of which is so much nonsense. He played a double part indeed; but his part was not cast in a hermitage. He was the son of a King who had just been put to death by his subjects, and nominally the head of a party shattered into a hundred factions—how should he not play a double part, or twenty times a double part? The wonder is that without assistance—in Hyde's absence—he fixed his mind on some aim, which was to use the Covenant for his legitimate purposes, and held firmly to it. He discovered that the Kirk was too astute for his young diplomacy, but even then he carried the thing through with admirable courage

and spirit to the last disillusionment. As the almost unaided venture of a boy in the midst of immensely powerful forces, the story of Charles from the time he decided to visit Scotland until he escaped from the south coast of England after the debacle of Worcester has rarely been matched for fortitude and character.

II

The rigours of the Kirk, however, if we may believe Hume, were not wholly unrelieved:

> The King's passion for the fair could not be altogether restrained. He had once been observed to use some familiarities with a young woman; and a committee of ministers was appointed to reprove him for behaviour so unbecoming a covenanted monarch. The spokesman of the committee, one Douglas, began with a severe aspect, informed the King that great scandal had been given to the godly, enlarged on the heinous nature of the sin, and concluded with exhorting his Majesty, whenever he was disposed to amuse himself, to be more careful for the future, in shutting the windows. This delicacy, so unusual to the place, and to the character of the man, was regarded by the King, and he never forgot the obligation.

The godly, in their less private attentions, continued to display an inspired ineptitude. Charles very soon learnt that to be King under their auspices would be hardly more agreeable than exile. He was placed in nominal command of an army that was continually being drained of its fighting power by the purging zeal of the Covenanters, no man being allowed to serve who was not an exact conformer. Within a fortnight of Charles's land-

ing at Aberdeen, where over the town gate one of Montrose's limbs acquainted him with the barbarity of his new patrons, Cromwell had entered Scotland. After some weeks of manœuvring the opposing armies were in touch. David Leslie, Charles's general, considered a given moment favourable beyond expectation for attack. It was on a Sunday, the Kirk would have none of it, the opportunity was lost, and a fresh purging was conducted with exemplary fervour. The camps were loud with orchestral voices, comforting Leslie in his discouragement with shrill assurances that the heretics with Agag[1] their chief were delivered into their hands. And on September 3 Agag swept the hosts of the Covenant to the winds at Dunbar, slaying three thousand and taking six thousand prisoners.

Charles had not been allowed to be present at the action. Solicitude for his person was pleaded, but he believed the reason to be the Kirk's fear of his personal ascendancy with the soldiery. He was bidden to the general humiliation and fasting, and renewed declarations of his family's iniquity. The defeat of Dunbar was, they were all agreed, the just visitation of God upon his house. Secretly Charles rejoiced in the discomfiture of his baiters, and hoped that it might strengthen his own position with them. But nothing could curb the hysteria of their domination; a month after

[1] "And (Saul) took Agag the king of the Amalekites alive, and utterly destroyed all the people with the edge of the sword."—1 Sam. xv.

Dunbar Charles could stand it no longer and attempted to escape, but being quickly lost in a strange country without friends, he was captured, and led back ignominiously to Perth. The abortive adventure was known as "The Start." Here he opened the travesty of a Parliament, heard more sermons, took more oaths, and performed several more humiliations. On January 1, 1651, the masquerade was carried a stage farther in the King's coronation at Scone. Robert Douglas, who was reported to be a grandson of Mary Stuart, preached a sermon that occupied a considerable part of the day, and started another at the moment when Argyll was placing the crown on Charles's head. This was the last act of Argyll's effective career in Scotland. Eleven years after he was to lie awaiting execution in Edinburgh Castle, as the cannon fired a salute upon the belated obsequies of Montrose. Now, his power broken at Dunbar, he came furtively to Scone with an eye on possible advantages in the future, performed the ceremony to Douglas's obbligato, and retired into the Highlands. Charles at least was rid of one tormentor. He now prepared for one more effort. The covenanting force was destroyed, but there was still a faint hope of rallying Montrose's Royalists. Through the early months of 1651 he attempted to organise a new army, and by the middle of the year had succeeded in raising over twenty thousand men. Cromwell's presence and generalship forbade the hope of any substan-

tial success in Scotland, and on August 1, having eluded the Parliamentarians, Charles headed for the south and crossed into England. Within a day or two Cromwell, leaving Monk in command in Scotland, was in pursuit, and the end of the reckless enterprise that had brought Charles from the Hague had begun.

III

On reaching England, Charles published a declaration of pardon and oblivion, and called upon his loving subjects to assemble in defence of the kingdom. The response did not fill a page of the roll-sheets. In Lancashire he was joined by the Earl of Derby, with a detachment of men, "but (such was Heaven's decree) on the 25th August, the earl's new-raised forces, being overpowered, were totally defeated, near Wiggan, in that county, by Col. Lillburn, with a regiment of rebellious sectaries." [1] Charles was advancing on Worcester, where he arrived two days before Derby's defeat. Again he called upon the loyal people of England, charging them to appear at Pitchcrift on the 26th of the month, or the 27th in the case of such as could not arrive on the earlier date. A little band of footmen with some two hundred horse answered the summons, but they were far short of repairing the attrition suffered by Charles's army since leaving Scotland. At the end of the month he could count on not more than fifteen thousand men. Cromwell was approaching with thirty thousand;

[1] *Boscobel.*

he had, moreover, an immense advantage in supplies, discipline, experience, and leadership. On the 28th skirmishing opened at Upton-on-Severn, while Cromwell advanced from his headquarters at Pershore to Stoughton, four miles south of the city itself. On the 29th "Sultan Oliver appeared with a great body of horse and foot on Red Hill, within a mile of Worcester." [1] For the next four

[1] *Boscobel.* Thomas Blount, a legal and miscellaneous historian, published *Boscobel,* or the Boscobel Tracts, in 1660. It contains a minute account of the battle of Worcester and Charles's subsequent flight, which latter part of his narrative supplements Charles's own version as dictated to Pepys, published in 1766 from the manuscript preserved in Magdalen College, Cambridge. Blount was something of a stylist, and as an example of panegyrical prose at its best, as well as for its present interest, his preface to *Boscobel* is worth reprinting here:

To the King's Most Excellent Majesty

SIR,

Among the many addresses which every day offers your sacred majesty, this humbly hopes your particular gracious acceptance, since it has no other ambition than faithfully to represent to your majesty, and, by your royal permission, to all the world, the history of those miraculous providences that preserved you in the battle of Worcester, concealed you in the wilderness at Boscobel, and led you on your way toward a land where you might safely expect the returning favours of Heaven, which now, after so long a trial, has graciously heard our prayers, and abundantly crowned your patience.

And, as in the conduct of a great part of this greatest affair, it pleased God (the more to endear his mercies) to make choice of many very little, though fit, instruments; so has my weakness, by this happy precedent, been encouraged to hope if not unsuitable for me to relate, what the wisest king thought proper for them to act; wherein yet I humbly beg your majesty's pardon, being conscious to myself of my utter incapacity to express, either your unparalleled valour in the day of contending, or (which is a virtue far less usual for kings) your strong and even mind in the time of your sufferings.

From which sublime endowments of your most heroic majesty, I derive these comforts to myself, that whoever undertakes to reach at your perfections, must fall short as well as I, though not so much. And while I depend on your royal clemency more than others, I am more obliged to be

Your majesty's most loyal subject,
And most humble servant,
THO. BLOUNT.

Blount's story, in spite of an official repudiation that was issued later, is likely to be authoritative; as he himself says:

days both armies were making tentative movements, and then on Wednesday, September 3, the first anniversary of Dunbar, Cromwell delivered his assault. From the first moment the issue was never in doubt. The Scots matched the Ironsides in gallantry, but in nothing else. The action commenced outside the city, and at once Cromwell's famous rapidity of deployment made itself felt. Charles himself fought through the battle, and Blount tells us that he charged at the head of a troop of the Highlanders upon Cromwell's post a mile away at Perrywood. He strove desperately to inspire his men to impossible glories, but he was outgeneralled, outnumbered, and, within a few hours, outfought. He was forced back into Worcester, and there in the city streets the last battle of the Civil War in England came to a bloody end. Says Blount, with desperate servility, "And as they had few persons of condition among them to lose, so no rebels but Quartermaster-General Morely and one Captain Jones were worth taking notice of to be slain in that battle." The royalist army was destroyed, and its remnants scattered in headlong flight along the midland roads and lanes. It was not until September 22 that Evelyn in Paris wrote

"Some particulars, I confess, are so superlatively extraordinary, that I easily should fear they would scarce gain belief, even from my modern reader, had I not this strong argument to secure me, that no ingenuous person will think me so frontless, as knowingly to write an untruth in an history where his sacred majesty (my dread sovereign, and the best of kings) bears the principal part, and most of the other persons concerned in the same action (except the Earl of Derby, Lord Wilmot, and Colonel Blague) still alive, ready to pour out shame and confusion on so impudent a forgery."

in his diary, "Arived the news of the fatal battle at Worcester, which exceedingly mortified our expectations."

IV

As night fell on the streets of Worcester, congested with bodies of the slain, Charles made his way out of the city, and then began the adventure that has been the theme of a thousand stories. His first design was to make for London. The chance of reaching Scotland was too slight to be taken, nor had he any enthusiasm left for that country; when at last he succeeded in reaching France, he said he would rather be hanged than set foot in it again. But danger was on every hand, and he found it difficult to set off on any road without taking a great number of unwanted companions with him. "We had," he told Pepys, "such a number of beaten men with us, of the horse, that I strove as soon as ever it was dark, to get from them; and though I could not get them to stand by me against the enemy, I could not get rid of them now I had a mind to it." Eventually a party of sixty detached themselves from the rest, and rode north until they were in the neighbourhood of Kidderminster, where Charles with Wilmot—to be created a year later the first Earl of Rochester—Buckingham, and Derby, who had escaped from Wigan, went apart to decide what should be done, and it was then that Derby told the King that on his way south he had found good and safe entertainment at

Boscobel House, on the borders of Staffordshire and Shropshire, the property of the Giffards, but at present inhabited only by a housekeeper, William Penderel. A member of the Giffard family was found, who offered to conduct Charles to Boscobel. At Stourbridge the party halted for a crust of bread, "the house affording no better provision," and their guide then proposed that the King should go to another Giffard house, White Ladies, for rest and refreshment. The offer was accepted, and at dawn White Ladies, half a mile from Boscobel and thirty miles from Worcester, was reached. The doors, we are told, were opened by George Penderel, a brother of the Boscobel housekeeper, and soon after their arrival Richard, a third brother, was summoned from his home, as also was William from Boscobel. Richard was sent back home for a suit of his clothes for the King's use, and in the meantime the fugitives were provided with sack and biscuits. On Richard's return he and William were taken "into an inner parlour" and there Charles was given into their especial charge. The party in general then desired that Charles should not divulge his plans to any one of them, that there might be nothing that they could be forced to confess, and he told no one but Wilmot of his intention to make his way to London. The main body of his sixty followers went on their way in an attempt to reach Scotland, and later in the morning Charles started on his travels attended by Richard Penderel. He was, he

told Pepys, dressed in "a pair of ordinary grey cloth breeches, a leathern doublet, and a green jerkin." His hair had been cut in disorderly fashion, and his face and hands were rubbed with soot. Fixing a provisional place of meeting in London with Wilmot, he set out, and spent the first day of his wanderings concealed in Spring Coppice, a wood near Boscobel. While there he realised the difficulties of the London journey; across the midlands to the east he was uncertain of hospitality, but his knowledge of the west assured him of friends on whom he could rely. He decided to attempt Swansea or some other western port in the hope of finding a boat for France. In the evening bread and cheese were procured from Richard Penderel's house, and the two then set their faces towards Wales, Charles now being addressed as Will Jones. Narrowly escaping detention by a miller on the way, at midnight they reached Madeley, seven miles off, and near to the point at which they proposed to cross the Severn. Here Penderel found food from a friend, and shelter in a barn where they spent the day. At night their host,[1] whose danger was no less than theirs, strongly discouraged them from Wales, the Severn being closely guarded at all points. And so Charles, his disguise being reinforced by means of walnut juice, turned back, like an animal in a

[1] His name was Woolf. Penderel knew his man, and although Charles was alarmed when he learnt that his identity was known, he was in no danger of betrayal. It was Mrs. Woolf who suggested the walnut juice.

trap, to Boscobel. Here, having again walked through the night, Charles found, at the house of William Penderel, an officer whom he knew, Colonel Carlis, also in hiding.

The following day belongs to the romance of history. Boscobel Wood, as the whole midland country-side, was being scoured by Cromwell's men for fugitives, particularly for one fugitive, "a tall man, above two yards high, with dark brown hair scarcely to be distinguished from black," for whose capture a reward of one thousand pounds was being offered. Boscobel House, with its priest-holes and secret chambers, was too obvious a place for concealment. Carlis[1] proposed that they should spend the day hidden in the thick autumn foliage of "a great oak, in a pretty plain place," says Charles, "where we might see around us. Of which proposition of his I approving, we went, and carried up with us some victuals for the whole day, namely bread, cheese, small beer . . . and here we stayed all the day." Charles had had little or no sleep since he had ridden out of Worcester, and Penderel, before day broke, arranged a cushion in a fork of the tree, and on this Charles, his head in Carlis's lap, "slumbered away some part of the time." It is satisfactory to know that the searchers duly came in eager pursuit by the tree and passed on without knowing how near they had been to a thousand pounds. And as late as 1859—I think it may have been a good deal later—

[1] He later took the name of Carlos.

the event was "still commemorated annually on the 29th of May [Charles's birthday] by the wearing of oak leaves and apples," which were "sold about the streets, decorated with gold leaves."

When evening came Charles was taken into Boscobel House, and there shown a secure retreat where he might rest, in no great comfort, while the Penderel brothers, throughout the night, watched every avenue of approach to the house. Early on Sunday morning Carlis did a little amateur sheep stealing from a neighbouring fold, it being thought unsafe to attempt the purchase of diet that was known to be above William Penderel's standard. "As soon as the mutton was cold," says Blount, "William cut it up and brought a leg of it into the parlour; his majesty called for a knife and trencher, and cut some of it into collops, and pricked them with the knife-point, then called for a frying-pan and butter, and fried the collops himself, of which he ate heartily; Colonel Carlis the while being but under-cook (and that honour enough too), made the fire, and turned the collops in the pan."

Wilmot had left White Ladies at the same time as his master, bound for London, and on horseback, being, as Charles surmises, "too big to go on foot." He, too, had found no progress but in a vexatious circle, and was now lodged between the house of a Mr. Whitgreave at Moseley, some six miles from Boscobel, and that of Colonel Lane at Bentley.

Charles wished to see his friend, the reports of Moseley as an asylum were good, and to stay in one place for more than a day or two was bad policy. Accordingly, on Sunday evening Charles left Boscobel, this time with no less than four Penderel brothers as an escort. He was too foot-sore to walk, and borrowed Humphrey Penderel's mill-horse; on the journey he jested that "it was the heaviest jade he ever rode on," to be countered by Humphrey with "My liege, can you blame the horse to go heavily, when he has the weight of three kingdoms on his back?" At three in the morning Charles arrived, to find his host, Mr. Whitgreave, Huddleston, the priest of whom we hear elsewhere, and Wilmot anxiously awaiting his arrival. During Monday he was concealed in a "clock over the porch." He learnt that Colonel Lane at Bentley had a sister, Jane Lane, who had come into possession of a pass into the west of England with permission to take a serving-man. She offered this opportunity to Charles, and on Tuesday night he proceeded to Bentley to avail himself of it. In the meantime suspicion of his presence in the neighbourhood had spread, and hourly search and inquisition was being made. Giffard, Whitgreave, and the Penderels needed all their wits and courage to avoid discovery of their secret. It is no small testimony to the devotion that Charles inspired among them that not one was deceived by stratagems or intimidated by threats.

V

On Wednesday, September 10, a week after Worcester, Charles started on the journey to Bristol, as William Jackson, freshly garbed and riding pillion in service before the spirited and beautiful Mistress Jane Lane. Two of Lane's kinsmen accompanied them as far as Stratford-on-Avon, and a third the whole journey, Wilmot and Colonel Lane travelling by another route. Charles's way was by Long Marston and Cirencester, and was beset by hourly dangers. At a wayside forge, where they stopped for the mare to be shod, the smith lamented that the rogue Charles Stuart had not yet been taken. "I told him," is Charles's own record, "that if that rogue were taken, he deserved to be hanged, more than all the rest for bringing the Scots. Upon which he said, that I spoke like an honest man, and so we parted." At a house where they rested for the night the butler recognised him. For several hours he said nothing, until Charles himself and his friends suspected the truth; then the man confided in his master, whereupon Charles sent for him, discovered that he had been a trooper in his father's army, and told him that he would trust him with his life as an old acquaintance. Whereupon the excellent Pope, which was his name, was very naturally willing to die for the King, which he nearly succeeded in doing. He was sent to search for a ship and a captain that would take Charles to France, a mission dangerous enough to daunt any but a very stout fellow.

Jane Lane's journey was at an end, but Charles's was not, and to travel without the protection of her pass would inevitably mean disaster. She decided to follow her loyalty to whatever the end might be. But even here obstacles of the most unexpected kind met them. Her cousin with whom she and William Jackson were staying at Bristol "miscarried of a dead child." William Jackson's departure on the following day was essential; but how should Jane leave her cousin in this condition? She fabricated a letter intimating that her father was dying and needed her immediate presence.

From Bristol they passed through Castle Cary to Trent in Somerset, near to Sherbourne in Dorset. Here Charles found other friends who could answer for his safe-conduct so long as he was unknown, and Jane Lane took her leave. Her part had been an heroic one, and Charles in later years made ample acknowledgment of the debt he owed. In Trent, too, he heard a sudden clamour of bells and bonfire making, and discovered that it was occasioned by a trooper who was boasting that he had killed the traitor Charles Stuart and was now wearing his buff coat.

Pope's quest of transport at Bristol had failed, but he had directed Charles to a likely agent at Lyme Regis. Here a promise of assistance was received, but, a proclamation being made against affording passage to travellers without a particular licence, it was not redeemed. The skipper's wife,

in fact, locked him up for the night as a precaution against Cromwell's displeasure. Charles moved on to Bridport, where he had engaged to wait for Wilmot, who was scouting for news. On arriving he found the town in possesion of fifteen hundred parliamentary troops, who were about to embark upon a sortie against Jersey, which Westminster had decided was an inconvenient refuge for Stuarts and the like. He was urged to retreat, but to do so would be to leave Wilmot stranded, and he went boldly into the best inn of the town, where he "found the yard very full of soldiers. I alighted, and taking the horses, thought it best to go blundering in among them, and lead them through the middle of the soldiers into the stable, which I did; and they were very angry with me for my rudeness." Charles Stuart, King of England, alias William Jackson, groom, twenty-one years old, was giving the age a very good run for its money, as he has done every age since. And when challenged by an ostler in the yard, William Jackson cracked a joke with him, but explained that he had to attend to his master's dinner.

VI

Charles, performing an intricate *pas de deux* with Wilmot along the southern counties, testing every possibility of escape and fending off dangers, passed through Salisbury and Hambleton, where with his cropped hair he was nearly beaten for a Roundhead by a Royalist sympathiser, and on

Tuesday, October 14, arrived at "a place, four miles off Shoreham, called Brighthelmstone," and there they spent the night at the George Inn. The host knew him, and once again Charles made a friend of a man at whose mercy he was. Even then the danger was not past. At Shoreham the boat that had been sought so diligently was waiting. Nicholas Tettersell, whose bark it was that had been chartered, when he came in during the evening, also recognised his passenger. To assist Charles Stuart was a capital offence, and he fairly enough complained that he had not been dealt with candidly. He was pacified, and professed his loyalty, but "thinking it convenient not to let him go home, lest he should be asking advice of his wife, or anybody else, we kept him with us in the inn, and sat up all night drinking beer, and taking tobacco with him." The next morning they sailed, and on October 16 Charles and Wilmot landed at Fécamp. If his escape had been a miracle of endurance, it had also been a miracle of luck. Hume estimates that during his flight not less than forty men and women had been "privy to his concealment." On October 29 Evelyn, still in Paris, wrote, "Came news and letters to the Queen . . . of his Majesty's miraculous escape after the fight at Worcester; which exceedingly rejoiced us." And in a minor but not less affecting key, on December 21, "Came to visit my wife, Mrs. Lane, the lady who conveyed the King to the sea-side at his escape from Worcester."

VII

Charles's active bid for the recovery of his throne had come to its melancholy end, and Hyde's conviction that by the weight of English opinion, and that alone, could he be restored had been abundantly vindicated. Cromwell had declared Worcester to be the "crowning mercy." It was, and not only for Cromwell's arms, but for the whole future of England. Far from holding that Charles had by his exploit suffered in character, we think that the energy, the resource, and the courage with which he had met, almost unaided, a succession of desperate crises left their deep and permanent mark on him. In due time his restoration was to be the best, the only solution of England's problems. But had he by any chance succeeded in his present designs, the Civil War would have been fought in vain, and he would almost certainly have been broken no less terribly than his father had been before him. In the light of history we view with equal satisfaction his overthrow at Worcester and each stage of the epic in which, for six weeks, he eluded its most violent consequences.

CHAPTER V

EXILE: THE SECOND PHASE

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Exile: The Second Phase

I

FOR the next eight years Charles passes from any important part in the scene of English history. He and Hyde explored many different possibilities of support in Europe, but none of them yielded effective results. Throughout the years from 1651 to 1660 there were in England a large number of Royalists whose fixed hopes were for the Restoration, and who never lost their faith that one day it would come. But their aspirations were silent ones, and although there was always a discreet liaison between the King's party at home and the exiled court, it had no influence upon events until the time when national feeling had itself veered round again to the desire for a monarchy. To follow the history of the Commonwealth and Protectorate in England does not belong to this study. As seen by Charles they were a storm the violence of which he now finally knew himself powerless to arrest; there was nothing for it but to take shelter, and wait in the hope that some day, when it should have spent itself, he might be able

to come out into the open again. And the only shelter available was the extremely uncongenial one provided by the charity of European diplomacy.

In its dealings with Charles this diplomacy, during the coming years, was always closely guided by consideration for the goodwill of the governing power of England. Never had the prestige of this country stood higher than it did under Cromwell, who told his Council that he "hoped to make the name of an Englishman as great as ever that of a Roman had been." Even Burnet, whose dislike for the man and his cause equalled Hyde's, was forced to admit that Cromwell's "name was become formidable everywhere. His favourite alliances was with Sweden, for Charles X (Gustavus) and he lived in great conjunction of counsels; but the States of Holland were in such a dread of him that they took care to give him no manner of umbrage, insomuch that when the King or his brother came at any time to visit their sister, the Princess Royal, a deputation of the States was instantly with them to let them know that there they could have no shelter. All Italy, in like manner, trembled at his name, and seemed to be under a panic of fear as long as he lived. His fleet scoured the Mediterranean, and the Turks durst not offend him. . . ." Nor were France and Spain less conciliatory; when Portugal was so misguided as to connive at Rupert's privateering enterprises on her coast, she was at once brought into subjection by

Blake and the parliamentary fleet. Charles could not fail to know that any hospitality that he might receive would be very strictly on sufferance. And at home Cromwell's triumph was complete. Royalist resistance in the outlying islands as in the American colonies was subdued; Ireton in Ireland and Monk in Scotland made the will of the Commonwealth absolute. Charles was reduced to as desperate conditions of exile as could well be devised.

His only stroke of good fortune, beyond the signal one of his escape, was to be rejoined by Hyde on reaching France, and to find with him another counsellor who was to work congenially with Hyde until the Restoration, in wise and devoted service to their master. This was James Butler, twelfth Earl and afterwards first Duke of Ormond, who on the final defeat of the royalist cause in Ireland had come to Paris. Born in 1610, and thus a year younger than Hyde, he was distinguished by a character to which we shall have later occasion more particularly to refer.

Charles arrived at Paris early in November 1651, destitute and with no prospects of replenishment. "France," says Hyde, "was not at all pleased with his being come hither nor did quickly take notice of his being there. The Queen his mother was very glad of his escape; but in no degree able to contribute to his support; they who had interest with her [Hyde's eye is on Jermyn] finding all she had, or could get, too little for their

own unlimited expense. Besides . . . her pension [was] paid with less punctuality than it had used to be; so that she was forced to be in debt both to her servants, and for the very provisions of her house; nor had the King one shilling towards the support of himself and his family." Well might Hyde feel that Charles's "present condition was very deplorable."

But although their plight was one of degrading penury, Charles having to tout for credit from his tailor, while Hyde and Ormond lived in obscure and squalid lodgings at a few shillings a week, the little court contrived to maintain all the circumstance of intrigue and domestic feud. France itself was in a state of violently spasmodic agitation, and for three years Charles and his followers lived on the fringe of a disturbance that they emulated in their own isolation and penury. Hangers-on of every description made a continual din of rabid religions and seedy politics. Charles was courted by worthless creatures who angled for favours that were not in his gift, and fawning or disappointed favourites were continually seeking to corrupt his council. Hyde and Ormond remained unmoved, keeping the wreck of the royal fortunes together with admirable patience and discretion. Charles himself attended to any responsible proposals for bettering his estate, but it was seldom that there were any such to be made, and for the rest he thought the petty commotion that surrounded him intolerable, as it was, and took his pleasures as he

could. Until the end of 1654 he had no choice but to endure a life in which a tedium of sordid chicanery was mitigated only by the hardly less sordid candour of Buckingham's company. The Montpensier farce was once more renewed, and, although Charles now had some French, advanced no farther than before. In this atmosphere of general indigence the resolution that was most likely to take possession of Charles's mind was that if a good time ever came he would see to it that it was a good time indeed. If when at last it did come it was embraced somewhat shamelessly, it was so perhaps in no small measure because he had been very bitterly schooled in a contempt for the opinion of his associates. And it must be remembered that through all the provocation of exile he kept not only the loyalty, but the personal regard of Hyde and Ormond.

II

By 1654 the situation had become desperate. Heavily in debt, at the end of their scanty credit, so that they could provide themselves with neither food nor clean linen, existing only on irregular doles from friends in England and an occasional alms begged by agents who went from court to court in ill-disguised mendicancy, Charles's establishment was at the literal point of starvation. Cromwell's newly drawn treaty with Mazarin, moreover, stipulated that France should no longer harbour the exiled Stuart. Departure was impera-

tive, and no country but Germany was open to the lamentable company. In June Charles left Paris, and proceeded to Spa in Flanders. On the way he was met by friends from England with news of growing discontent with Cromwell's rule and with enthusiastic assurances; satisfactory as this might be, he told them to go back and be careful not to get themselves into trouble, and gave them civil warnings not to "flatter themselves with vain imaginations." At Spa he met his sister, the Princess of Orange, now a widow with an infant son. After a short stay they were driven from the town by an outbreak of small-pox and moved onto a watering-place in the neighbourhood of Maestricht. The German princes had promised Charles some assistance, but their own poverty would allow no more than a slender subsidy; this, however, Hyde tells us "was managed with very good husbandry," and for a time the household was relieved from the more acute poverty that had been its lot in France. In the middle of September Charles arrived in Cologne, where he parted from his sister on her return into Holland. He was received by the city with liberal civilities, and settled into more comfortable quarters than he had known for many a long day, and with some reasonable hopes of a moderate competence, his German revenue being supplemented at this time by a pension of nine thousand pounds a year, paid jointly to himself and his brother James by Spain, which country was now in difficulties with Cromwell. This allow-

ance, however, while it was sometimes paid, sometimes was not.

In Cologne Charles won Hyde's admiration by his good sense: "he betook himself with great cheerfulness to compose his mind to his fortune; and, with a marvellous contentedness, prescribed so many hours in the day to his retirement in his closet; which he employed in reading and studying both the Italian and French languages; and at other times, walked much upon the walls of the town (for . . . he had no coach, nor would suffer his sister to leave him one), and sometimes rid into the fields; and, in the whole, spent his time very well." Here also he began to show admirable firmness on occasion. He had left his youngest brother, Henry, Duke of Gloucester, now fifteen years of age, in Paris with his mother. He now heard that Henrietta Maria was trying to force the boy into the Roman Church, and on meeting with unexpected and spirited resistance from Henry, who assured her that his brother would disapprove no less than his father would have done, she asserted her authority by placing him under the discipline of her almoner and secluding him from any other influences. Charles was as little pleased with the display of parental bullying as with a policy that, if he did not check it, would lend colour to the rumours that he himself had Catholic sympathy, and so alienate the support of a powerful body of the Royalists. On receiving the news, he at once sent Ormond to demand that

Henry should return with him to Cologne. The Queen expostulated, but Ormond replied that his orders were peremptory. Short of forcible detention, she could but submit, which she did with the worst possible grace and in a high temper, Henry in the meantime protesting that he was very willing to accompany my lord of Ormond or anyone else to Cologne. Little by little people here and there were beginning to learn that Charles, for all his amiability and caprice, was a young man of decided character.

Charles lived quietly on in Cologne for some months, troubled sometimes by mean disloyalties, or roused by moments of brightening prospect. It was now 1655, six years since the execution of his father, and the second of Oliver's protectorate. Neither Charles nor his friends could tell but what it might be an indefinite time yet before his restoration, whether, indeed, it could ever be accomplished. But in fact more than half the period of the exile had passed, and the words of encouragement that came from England vaguely and almost inaudibly began to gather force. An actual rising was attempted, and Charles was persuaded to be in readiness at Flushing in case his presence should be called for. Wilmot, now the Earl of Rochester, was sent into England to guide the movement, which, however, failed of inertia, and with little credit to Rochester, who, said Clarendon, "saw danger at a distance with great courage." But the insurrection, weakly executed

as it was, had its significance; a greater significance indeed than anybody at the time knew. Cromwell had been the instrument of a condign reckoning in the English state; but the lesson, little as many might yet acknowledge it, had been learnt, and Cromwell the ruler was not at all the same thing as Cromwell the prophet. He was a great ruler, but he was not a king. That is to say, he depended for his authority wholly upon personal force, and under that, however notable it might be, the English people were already becoming restive. So long as Oliver lived, his own iron will could be counted on to keep insurgency in order, and his masterly judgment and control of national affairs to give insurgency little popular credit. But far-seeing observers were asking themselves what would happen when the iron will and the masterly judgment were removed by death; and it was already believed by many that no one would be found capable of emulating that commanding example. It was to be shown in less than five years that they were right. Determined to do nothing rashly, but to neglect no opportunity, Hyde, with his very inadequate machinery, continued to circulate what propaganda he could; and he did it with unfailing acumen.

"The King," says Hyde, "remained at Cologne above two years, contending with the rigour of his fortune with great temper and magnanimity; whilst all the princes of Europe seemed to contend amongst themselves, who should most em-

inently forget and neglect him." In March 1657 an accommodation was made between Charles and Spain, the breach between that country and Cromwell having become complete, and he was invited to move his court to Bruges, then under Spanish rule. He managed to leave Cologne without debts, which, reasonably, "in the low condition his Majesty had been in, and still was, gave reputation to his economy." It was in this year that Cromwell called the first Parliament that had assembled since he broke up the House in 1653, the Parliament that was in turn to be succeeded by the one dissolved by the army in 1659 with such memorable consequences. And this action seemed to knit up the forces, already sufficiently formidable, that were arrayed against the exiled court.

III

In Bruges Charles received a further little pittance from Spain, now anxious to patronise any promising or possible opposition to Cromwell. With the aid of Ormond's Irish interests and the Scots who were at his court, he raised four regiments that were to serve with the Spaniards until such time, if such a time should come, as an invasion of England might seem feasible. This enterprise took several months, and it was not until Christmas, 1657, that Charles was disengaged from its organisation, in which he took a closely active part. At this time Hyde was made Lord Chancellor, and Ormond undertook his extremely

hazardous expedition into England to ascertain the exact state of royalist feeling at home. He found, in spite of internal dissensions, a quickening confidence, and he was convinced of a mounting anxiety in Cromwell's mind. No definite signs of disruption in the established government were yet perceptible, but there were undertones of the coming storm. The court at Bruges began to be occupied with diplomacy that at last seemed to have some future, dark as that future might be. Spain, in a continual vacillation of mind and impatient of prospects that seemed to come no nearer, could yet not persuade herself that Charles might not, after all, make the winning throw, and continued to indulge in indecisive parleyings. In February 1658 Charles moved to Brussels, and until the autumn his cause was deep in commotions, without making any visible progress. And then in September came news that was greeted at his court with a cry of excitement, "the Devil is dead." On the 3rd of that month the greatest commoner that England had ever bred breathed his last in Whitehall, and at that moment the Restoration was assured.[1]

[1] Evelyn's curt notice is: "3rd September. Died that arch-rebel, Oliver Cromwell, called Protector." On October 22 he saw "the superb funeral of the Protector. He was carried from Somerset-house in a velvet bed of state, drawn by six horses, housed with the same; the pall held by his new Lords; Oliver lying in effigy, in royal robes, and crowned with a crown, sceptre, and globe, like a King . . . but it was the joyfullest funeral I ever saw; for there were none that cried but dogs, which the soldiers hooted away with a barbarous noise, drinking and taking tobacco in the streets as they went." Six months later, on April 25, 1659, he could write: "A wonderful sudden change in the face of the public; the new Protector, Richard, slighted; several pretenders and parties strive for the government: all anarchy and confusion; Lord have mercy on us!" Yet another six months, and on October 11 we find: "The Army now turned out

Not that the assurance was an easy one; not indeed, that it had as yet by any means taken possession of either Royalist or Roundhead. Mazarin, with his incomparable genius for blowing hot and cold at the same moment, hastened to present his compliments to Charles and sternly rebuked members of the French court who made demonstrations of delight at the happy event of Cromwell's demise. Another year was to pass in plots, convulsions of opinion, daily fluctuating outlook, and storms of passion, before the return to monarchy was finally made. But the scene of this disorder, shaping slowly to design, was England. Charles and Hyde could but wait, as they had waited, now with rising hope, but still unable to exercise any but a very slender control on events. It is to England that for a time we must turn.

the Parliament. We had now no government in the nation; all in confusion; no magistrate either owned or pretended, but the soldiers, and they not agreed. God Almighty have mercy on, and settle us!"

CHAPTER VI

RESTORATION: PART I

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I

THE recall of the Rump of the Long Parliament by the army in 1658 at once inflamed rather than composed the dissensions of the time. At first there was a difficulty in getting a quorum (forty) of the old members to answer the summons, which Lenthall, the Speaker, had declined to issue. The Whips at length brought in the requisite number, not overlooking the gaols in their search. Lenthall, when he perceived that a House would be formed in spite of his obstruction, took his place at the head of the new Parliament as it marched through the soldiers, back to the seats in Westminster now resumed by the men who had been expelled from them by Cromwell five years before. Then it was found that the army was employing its own act of exclusion. As the procession entered Westminster, four Presbyterian members of the old Parliament presented themselves at the door, loudly complaining that they had not been called with the others, and asserting their right of entry. Squalls of controversy blew along the corridors and through the lobby of the House,

the indomitable Mr. Prynne being foremost in protest against this display of a new tyranny. He might well complain. A victim of Star Chamber savagery in 1634 and 1637, his mutilated person had suffered exclusion by Pride from the Long Parliament in 1648, and now after ten years he was confronted by a fresh injustice. He and his companions were told that any member excluded for challenging the Puritan army's autocracy in 1648 were not reinstated by the new ordinance, which applied only to the members expelled by Cromwell in 1653. This distinction, far from consoling, naturally enough infuriated them. They were turned back by force, but two days later Prynne slipped through the guards into the House and gave Vane and Haslerig, the leaders of the new assembly, a taste of his temper in good old Puritan fashion. His claims, however, were rejected, and the next time he came to the House he was refused admittance. The adjustments of opinion in England that brought on this crisis have not to be traced here, but the incident summarises the continual disturbance by which the mind of the country was shaken. It was in this disturbance that more and more the idea of a restored monarchy recommended itself to a distracted people.

II

The idea at first assumed fantastic shapes. Richard Cromwell, in effect deposed from the Protectorship by the ascendant Army-Rump party,

was invited by the Royalists to ally himself to their cause. He seriously considered the proposal. Offers of help from the French King, however, who, guided by Mazarin, looked with no favour upon the re-establishment of a Commonwealth as distinct from the Protectorate in England, encouraged Richard to hope that he might regain his own power, and the Protector failed in his actually formed engagements with Charles's agents at the last minute. But he remained "a permanent, though not very effective, centre for all hostile hopes and plots against the reviving Commonwealth," [1] while his brother Henry in Ireland and Monk in Scotland were a constant anxiety to the new Republicans, who wanted the return of neither King nor Protector. Monk's mind was, in fact, already exploring the possibility of Charles's restoration, and Henry Cromwell at one moment was on the point of setting up the royal standard in Dublin. Edward Montagu, devoted to the memory as he had been to the service of Oliver, had no faith in the new men, and from his command at sea watched the reviving monarchist activity with something that a jealous and astute Republican might have suspected to be very like sympathetic interest. Montagu at that time had no considerable political authority, but he was known to be personally in high favour with the fleet, and therefore dangerous.

Up and down the country conspiracy stirred.

[1] Guizot.

Over a long course of years Hyde had steadily warned Royalists against the danger of risking all on any ill-timed venture. Patience, which he himself so splendidly exemplified, was the continual burden of his charge. His sole ambition in life during the years of exile was to see the Restoration achieved, but he was prepared to wait, it might be indefinitely; to ensure that no attempt made before the time was ripe should bring the cause into irreparable ruin. But that now the time was ripe eager Cavaliers everywhere began to believe. Messengers hurried to and from one secret meeting to another, and communications with the exiled court were maintained in a way that says little for the republican secret service. The plotters were encouraged by growing confusion in the Government. First the army, finding that the recall of the Rump did not instantly result in a domestic millennium, took fright and called upon the instrument of its own resurrection to re-establish the Protectorate under very liberal securities. Even the least docile of the officers decided that Richard was preferable to anarchy. But the Rump displayed an unexpected distaste for being anybody's instrument. It was troublesomely determined to govern. A temporary accommodation was made between its members and the army leaders, but it soon broke down, and dissension continued to grow, and with it the rising hopes of the Royalists. King's men were even to be found in the newly constituted Council of State,

and Hyde would learn with satisfaction that the Government was almost as hard pressed for funds as Charles himself. No one seemed either capable of collecting or willing to pay taxes and levies, and the emoluments of public office were actually confiscated by the Treasury. The House had to provide itself with an armed guard, and then to bribe it with increased pay. Staunch enough in their principles, Vane and his fellows speedily found that they had no authority, and that the problems facing them were, in view of their situation, beyond their settlement on any terms. Doctrinaire philosophers, tired political hacks, zealous bigots, and a few men of real but distracted efficiency proposed to themselves the reformation of a disrupted state without resources, power, or public sympathy. Bills of all kinds were introduced, debated, passed, but they meant nothing, and it soon became clear to anxious observers, among them the Royalists, that the new Parliament was neither willing to be the army's tool nor able to govern on its own account. The French ambassador, reporting to Mazarin, wrote, "The Commonwealth must subsist or the King must return," and Charles had daily growing reason to hope that in terms of the Rump the Commonwealth was well on the way to collapse. After the confusion of its first months, the Parliament for a time indeed looked as though it might weather the storm. It turned Richard Cromwell out of Whitehall, and it apparently succeeded in persuading foreign diplomacy that the

return of Charles would involve a continental war. But it was an illusion of prosperity only, and, moreover, the turn of events was exactly what Hyde wanted. The farther Richard was out of the way, the better for Hyde's policy, and if there was one thing that that astute statesman wanted less than another, it was the restoration of the monarchy through the intervention of foreign arms. Let France by all means be discouraged from any idea of fighting to put Charles back on the throne of England. What Hyde relied on for that great purpose was dissension in England itself, and he was confident that under any apparent successes of the Parliament this was proceeding apace.

In the meantime, as the months went on, Charles's adherents at home were assured to-day and despondent to-morrow. They all believed that the eagerly awaited day was approaching, but the long indignity of years was as nothing to the feverish anxieties of this last vigil of their loyalty. And among themselves there was not a wholly undivided purpose, there even being a Catholic plot to prefer James to his brother Charles. Hyde countered this, however, with his usual adroitness, and at length it was considered that the moment had arrived for the general royalist insurrection. Simultaneous action was to be taken at points all over the country at the end of July 1659. Charles announced his readiness to join the rising in person where and when he should be required, and he informed Montagu that he was willing to prove the

attachment of the fleet to his cause by placing himself under its protection. "You have given me an account," he wrote to his agent Mordaunt in England, "of the particular preparations made, and resolutions taken, by my friends, and since it hath pleased God to raise their hearts to that courage that they will undertake to put themselves into arms upon my own or my brother's appearing with them, I will look upon it as the dawning of God's wonderful mercy to us all, and a lively instance that he will cure the wound by the same hand as he gave, and make the English nation the means of removing that misery which it principally brought upon itself, without [here we see Hyde's hand] owning those great obligations to foreign princes, which they seldom yield without some advantage to their own interest."

Plans, for the moment, however, miscarried. Parliament was warned by a gentleman named Willis, who distinguished himself in the annals of treachery by informing Thurloe, the Secretary of State, of Mordaunt's designs and informing Mordaunt that he had done so. The House acted promptly, and made military demonstrations that with one exception prevented the projected risings. In the meantime Charles was wandering along the French coast of the Channel, waiting for news, only to hear that Sir George Booth alone of the royalist leaders had not been intimidated. But Booth, though gallant, was unable to do more than make his gesture against Lambert, who was sent

by Parliament to suppress him, and the royalist discomfiture seemed for the moment again to be complete. Montagu, arriving in the Thames ready to declare himself for the restored monarchy, had hastily to devise shortage of stores as a pretext for his return, and managed to establish an explanation that nobody believed.

But the Parliament, though temporarily successful again, was now thoroughly alarmed, and with good reason. Its moderation in dealing with royalist prisoners, and its indecision before such an obvious threat as Montagu's, showed how precarious it knew its own authority to be. The army had been willing, if no more, to check a rising that had gathered no momentum, but what if the momentum should presently disclose itself? Moreover, its very success in cutting off the insurrection again turned against itself and in Hyde's favour, since it warned Europe that the new Commonwealth might after all be a very dangerous neighbour that would, in Mazarin's words, be a hundred times more formidable than the power of the Kings of England ever was. Mazarin's logic is not here very apparent; he still declined to involve himself in any open hostility to the existing English Government, and he refused Charles a passport through France when he wanted to try his fortunes with Spanish interest. That Mazarin, however, distrusted the Commonwealth that he continued to flatter was news that would reach Hyde, nor would its significance escape him. He did not want

France as an ally, but any goodwill withheld from the Parliament was possible advantage to Charles. As for the passport, Charles gave Mazarin the slip, and reached Fontarabia *incognito*. There he made what bids he could in the market of European politics, with a good deal of reciprocal ceremony, but little notable success. The Commonwealth ambassador, in fact, was treated in Charles's presence with pointed consideration. In arms and diplomacy the Republicans were victorious; a stranger to the scene might well have supposed that the Restoration was farther off than ever.

And yet within nine months it was an accomplished fact. Booth defeated, the Republicans stayed a moment for general felicitations. The City of London dined the House of Commons with many protestations of support; Lambert was given a thousand pounds "to buy him a jewel," and largesse was distributed generally. Then reality had to be faced again, and it was discouraging. Lambert was said to have ambitions for the Protectorate himself, and disconcerting demands were renewed by the officers in general. The leaders of the House fell at odds among themselves, Vane eventually supporting the officers whose demands were refused. A new and modified petition was presented, and after a debate lasting several days, and conducted in a ferment of passion, this also was rejected, and a number of the officers, Lambert among them, dismissed from employment. The

next day, October 13, Westminster was under arms. Hearing that Lambert purposed forcibly to dissolve Parliament, the members posted their guards, strongly reinforced, about the House. Lambert retaliated by cutting off all the approaches to Westminster. The troops of the opposing factions harangued each other, but no blows were struck. Some of the parliamentary soldiers went over to Lambert, and as the day advanced his position grew stronger. Late in the afternoon, a few members having got through Lambert's blockade by going into the House from the river, the Council of State sat. Lambert himself was present, and after a stormy scene the Parliament gave way and voted itself out of existence, leaving Lambert nominally in control until the assembly of a new House, provisions for which were settled during the debate. But everyone knew that Lambert was incapable of controlling anything, and that this sort of thing could not go on. England was in effect without any semblance of a responsible government, and the entire country was heartily sick of not knowing from hour to hour who were its rulers, or if, indeed, it had any rulers at all. The English people had been willing to bow to the thunder of Cromwell's passion, but they were not prepared to go on being henpecked by Lambert and his like, and this last brawl was the breaking-point. At this moment Hyde must have known that the reward of his inexhaustible patience was at hand, and that now it could only be a question

of devising a formula before his country would itself demand the consummation of his long desire.

III

During the autumn crisis of 1659 all eyes were turned towards a figure who had taken no prominent part in the proceedings, but whose mind at least had nevertheless been constantly active. George Monk, now fifty years of age, and General of the Forces in Scotland, was known by all parties to be the man with whom the key to the situation might yet be found to rest. His character was a curious one. Bred a Royalist, and serving under the King's command at the beginning of the Civil War before becoming one of Cromwell's ablest leaders, he still had an instinctive bent towards monarchic tradition. But in practice, party as such meant little to him. Not greatly troubled by principles, he was brave, a hard fighter, and gifted with a large share of common-sense. Without idealism, he none the less wished his country well, and after long experience he regarded stability of government as that, or any, country's first need. In pursuit of this he was willing to serve any party that seemed likeliest to supply it. Convinced that the rule of Charles I was rotten, he joined the movement to overthrow it, and helped to establish Cromwell in power, satisfied that this was a patriotic course, as it was. If now he should be convinced that the Republicans who had succeeded Cromwell were incompetent to keep

government firmly in hand, he was prepared to oppose them as thoroughly as he had done the dead King. And at this time, for all the discreet taciturnity that was habitual with him, it was rumoured that he was so convinced, and apprehension in the Parliament ran high. Any open challenge of his loyalty would have been fatal, and so the Parliament men, politicians and soldiers alike, had to content themselves with constant assurances of confidence that were not asked for. Under these Monk merely became more inscrutable.

His support was invaluable for two reasons. In the first place his presence was in itself a guarantee of substantiality in any cause that he espoused. His scruples in any abstract fidelity might be slight, but he had reliable judgment, and people knew it. If he was actuated by self-interest, it was at least a self-interest that attached him to practical rather than to discredited designs. The only thing that could buy Monk was sound sense. Secondly, "Old George's" influence with the army was no less dominating than Montagu's with the fleet. If Monk went, an important, probably a decisive, body of the soldiery would go with him. While, therefore, the Parliament looked anxiously for any sign that might escape him, Charles and his friends used all their dexterity to win over a mind already not indisposed to be persuaded. After some diplomatic skirmishing, Charles wrote a letter to Monk, openly inviting his assistance, and offering him his own terms. Monk received

these approaches at first with his customary secretiveness, and then declared himself to a few chosen confidants by showing them the draft of a remonstrance that he proposed to send to Westminster in the name of the army in Scotland. This, they knew, would amount to and was meant to be a repudiation of the Government, since the redress demanded was neither within the temper nor the power of the Commons to grant. At a late stage in the proceedings word came of Booth's rising in England, and Monk cautiously decided to wait and see what its issue would be. With the subsequent news of Lambert's success republican zeal in the army received a fresh stimulus, and Monk saw that action at the moment would be inopportune, not to say dangerous. He was not, in any sense, going to lose his head. If he was to support a restoration movement, it must be one that did things better than that.

Monk was, in fact, rather scared that he had said too much. Other people had been admitted now to his counsels, and he trusted no one's talent for secrecy but his own. He wrote to Lenthall, the Speaker, tendering his resignation on the score of age and infirmity. That he seriously intended to retire we may doubt, but the answer from Parliament would show him where he stood, and how active the suspicion against him, if it existed, was. But Parliament did not see the letter. Lenthall, having by now royalist intentions of his own, not wishing to see Monk removed from a position

where he might be so useful, and fearing that the Republicans in their present temper would be only too glad of any excuse to shelve a man whom they distrusted with so much reason, withheld it until Monk had recovered from his uneasiness and authorised his correspondent to withdraw it. But Monk moved as warily as ever. He sent no answer to Charles's letter, and when Lambert effected his coup he denounced it and sent loyal assurances to the Parliament. Not, indeed, that he failed to realise that the Parliament no longer existed effectively, but he was not willing to submit to any veiled dictatorship from Lambert. He assembled his own men, and, appealing to the unexceptional principle that military power ought to be subject to civil control, he warned them that if they countenanced this outrage in London the ambitions that had overridden the Common would rapidly be directed against themselves. The Scotch army, with the exception of certain officers who were promptly cashiered, stood firm for the only leader that they trusted. Monk's strategy and diplomacy thereupon were alike masterly. He issued a declaration that he was under arms for the sole purpose of vindicating the rights of Parliaments; he wrote letters to Lambert and other officers, exhorting them to refrain from interference with the lawful government, to Lenthall again, assuring him of his good faith, to commanders of the fleet and to the governors of various towns in England acquainting them of his purpose to de-

fend the civil order if needs be; he addressed himself to ridding his own army of its disaffected elements, sending doubtful regiments on distant missions, promoting men worth encouraging from the ranks, spreading intelligent propaganda among his troops showing that Lambert was a common danger to be resisted, and putting his whole establishment into spick-and-span order. And then he waited for the next move.

The position was full of delicate and yet powerful irony, and in contriving it Monk showed unquestionable genius. He was not committed to Charles by any word or deed or the suggestion of either. He refused, indeed, to have any dealings with the Royalists whatever. The Parliament in whose name he was prepared to strike he knew to be impotent and not worth preserving. He had openly warned Lambert that if he persisted in his present designs he would have to reckon with the army in Scotland. This warning he knew would be ignored, and he had complete faith in his own power to defeat Lambert in the field if it came to that. He was, therefore, or at least he reasonably considered himself, to be master of whatever situation should arise. How he would use his advantage there was no immediate necessity to decide. Nobody could accuse him of impropriety in anything that he had done, and from his vantage of security he could watch events.

His letters were received and considered by a new Committee of Safety that had been set up

after the disbanding of the revived Rump. On this sat Lambert and other officers, and also some of the old parliamentary leaders, such as Vane. All alike were nonplussed. The soldiers knew that here was a challenge that was no idle threat; the civilians were not hoodwinked by this sudden solicitude for themselves that they knew only too bitterly they had done nothing to deserve. Vane hastily declared that Monk was aiming at nothing less than the restoration of Charles. He did not understand that Monk was aiming at nothing but putting himself in a commanding position against whatever might happen. Envoys were sent by the Committee on the hopeless errand of finding out precisely what Monk did intend to do, and Lambert followed close on their heels to take command of all arms in the north of England and march against Monk if the mission failed to get satisfactory assurances.

Monk, we may believe, did not look for any arrangement to result from his negotiations with England. The chief purpose of his correspondence was to delay action. He thought that every week would increase confusion among the interests opposed to him, demoralise Lambert's army, and strengthen his own. He judged wisely. The soldiers and the parliamentarians in London who formed the new Committee improvised one desperate expedient after another. They gave Military commands to civilians, Vane being one of them, to create an impression of unity. Nobody was

impressed, and an urgent appeal to the City for funds met with a cold refusal. They aimlessly made a half-hearted gesture of conciliation themselves towards the Royalists, a proposal even being forwarded to Hyde that Charles should marry Lambert's daughter, to which ineptitude no answer was vouchsafed. They forwarded a new treaty to Monk, which if adopted would have shorn him of all power and prestige, and veiled their intentions so artlessly as merely to excite the general's ridicule. He showed it to his men with instant effect; they loudly declared that they were unreservedly at his command. They wanted to throw the document back at its framers with contempt, but Monk knew better than that—he used it as a new pretext for negotiations and a little more delay. Great and small men, mean and honourable, in the London factions were together at their wits' ends. Out of their distraction arose another circumstance wholly favourable to Monk. A few members of the old Council of State, the executive instrument of the dissolved Parliament, realising the futility of the situation, met in secret and declared for Monk, appointing him General-in-Chief of all armies in the field. In theory they represented the only authority that Monk had recognised in his declarations, and this theory was now perfectly adapted to his purpose. Their warrant regularised his position in a way that his most sanguine hopes could hardly have expected. He had now the one formal sanction that he wanted

for acting at any moment as he deemed best. He moved with his army from Edinburgh to Berwick, and again waited.

IV

Favourable news came to him from England. Fairfax promised substantial support in Yorkshire, the fleet plainly showed its distrust of the Committee of Safety, the Governor of Portsmouth announced his readiness to support Monk's policy in the disposition of his charge, bands of men began to desert from Lambert's to Monk's forces, while similar encouragement came from Ireland. In the meantime Monk's inscrutability was preserved. To all questions as to whether he meant to bring Charles home, he was deaf. Only to his chaplain, Price, after long interrogation, is he reported to have exclaimed "By God's help I will do it." And Price was as mum as his master. Monk began to survey the bank of the Tweed for the most suitable ford by which to cross into England. In December 1659 he selected a point at the little village of Coldstream.

The discord in London grew. The City magnates, emboldened by Monk's growing power, made guarded expressions of their sympathy with him, while there was popular approval for his claims in behalf of Parliament, but still not yet for Charles. An abortive but significant attempt was made on the Tower, and its leaders plainly pronounced "General Monk, the ablest and most

experienced Commander in these nations," to be the deliverer raised up by an "admirable Providence." The Committee of Safety, now panic-stricken, made a last effort to forestall what they were convinced were Monk's real designs by again offering co-operation with the Royalists. On December 22 an interview took place between Whitelocke, perhaps the shrewdest of the parliamentarians, and Fleetwood, a soldier of high standing if of no marked ability. It was at length clear, said Whitelocke, that the King would return, and the only hope now left for them was to become themselves the instruments of his restoration. He proposed that Fleetwood should take possession of the Tower, and thence place himself at the head of the army as the champion of the royalist cause. Fleetwood was impressed, and received Whitelocke's word that he himself would join actively in the enterprise; further, that he was willing to go to Charles as emissary from the new association. All seemed settled, and arrangements were made for Whitelocke's immediate departure, when Vane and others appeared on the scene. They persuaded Fleetwood that nothing must be done without Lambert's consent. Whitelocke protested that to communicate with Lambert in Newcastle would involve a fatal waste of time. His remonstrances were in vain; Fleetwood gave way, and once more the several factions of the party were thrown into chaotic indecision.

Vane and his friends shared Whitelock's view

that the restoration of the monarchy was now the issue immediately to be faced, but they saw the issue as a danger only. They flattered themselves with no hopes of security or accommodation if Charles were back on the throne. So that there was nothing for it but to go on exploring one forlorn hope after another. They now decided to call a new Parliament, in which they promised themselves the controlling voice. The necessary proclamation was issued, but the new House could not be assembled in less than six weeks, and in the meantime their scheme again hopelessly miscarried. The troops, with no accredited leaders, no pay, no authority, and no respect, fell at first into a lawlessness that brought them into contempt among the people, and then recovering themselves demanded the immediate setting up of a Government that could govern. There was, they said, no need to wait six weeks; they admitted the dissolution of the late Parliament to be an unlawful act, and urged its recall as a Government in being. Lenthall received their capitulation, and the officers who had effected the dissolution and the civilians who had afterwards joined them made what terms they could or fled. For the third time the Long Parliament, now decrepit and shambling, entered Westminster, and again Mr. Prynne and his persevering Saints were refused admittance. The tragedy had become a farce, and when Monk received intelligence that the thrice-outraged Rump was again propped up on the seat

of government in England, he decided that, king or no king, this kind of mockery must be endured no longer. On January 1, 1660, in deep frost under a blue sky, the Coldstream Guards, as they were thereafter so gloriously to be known, crossed into England, and the act of Restoration had begun.

V

The opposition, as Monk anticipated, had faded away. Fairfax, the Puritan hero of Marston Moor and Naseby, was one of the many Cromwellians who saw nothing but disaster in the inheritors of Cromwell's rule. Now, crippled with gout at forty-eight, he shook off his infirmities, mounted his horse, and led his Yorkshire followers in a demonstration to the county city, which gave itself up to his, which was Monk's, direction. The Northumberland gentry met Monk himself as he advanced into England, offering their services, and Newcastle followed the example of York. The City of London, quite sure now as to which way the cat was jumping, sent official welcomes to the advancing general, without any exact knowledge of what his designs were. Lambert, the desertion of his men and officers becoming a landslide, concealed himself from the wrath to come. On January 11 Monk arrived at York, and there visited Fairfax at Nun-Appleton, where ten years before Andrew Marvell had been tutor to the child Mary Fairfax and added imperishable

honours to English poetry. What passed at the meeting we do not know. Charles must have been a theme of their conversation, but Monk still declined to avow his intentions, even to those in his counsels. Hyde's informants in England told him that they could ascertain nothing of Monk's mind, and when an officer was heard to say "This Monk will at last bring in Charles Stuart," the general "struck him publicly with his cane, and threatened anyone who should repeat the calumny with the same or a worse chastisement." Mordaunt confessed to Charles, "He is a black Monk. And I cannot see through him."

It is unlikely that Monk himself, even at this date, knew what he meant to do. He must by now have decided that Charles was the probable solution of the national difficulty, but to this belief there was still some margin of doubt, and so long as that remained, his policy was to strengthen his position day by day, while retaining his independence for such use as should presently seem best. He was a practical patriot; the England that he cared for was a safe England, and he was determined to compromise himself in no enterprise that had not in the present crisis the making of a safe England as its sole aim. The London factions collapsed from one imbecility into another, plastering the town with proclamations that nobody troubled to read, breathing threats of execution that they had no means of enforcing, expelling each other from the House by one door and slip-

ping in again an hour later by another in a buffoonery of hide-and-seek, and making fantastic bids for the favour of anyone who had no favour to bestow. A man's confederate of to-day would on the morrow commend him to the gallows with shrill imprecations, and to perform any service at one moment to what masqueraded as the state was to be put under inquisition as to what you thought or said or did a week ago. The patchwork of parties that was endeavouring to administer government from London was, in short, suffering from severe nervous breakdown, and in the meantime a man of imperturbable common-sense was making a leisurely advance on the capital at the head of some six thousand troops, seasoned in long campaigns, and solidly devoted to his leadership.

Suddenly it was realised that this taciturn danger was so placed that he could take control whenever he decided to do so, and astonishing measures of conciliation were improvised. On January 15, 1660, the House might have been supposed to take an aloof interest in Monk's movements; on the 16th, with no vestige of warning, it voted a landed estate of an annual value of one thousand pounds to him and his heirs for ever. A letter was sent to him from the assembled Commons explaining how relieved they were to find that so notable a public benefactor was coming to their vindication. Money was promised for his gallant and highly respected troops, he was assured of the deep sense of gratitude with which

his services were regarded, and deputies were sent to conduct him on his way to the fitting scene of his activities. Monk, trained in caustic humour by a wife, Nan Clarges by name, who was a farrier's daughter of the Savoy, and had been his mistress for some years before he married her, found these advances diverting, if no more.

The succeeding weeks bristled with events conceived in this temper of desperate caprice. Of these but the briefest summary is necessary here. Monk at a distance from his interrogators could keep silence, but as he approached London, and was beset by envoys from every interest, it became necessary for him to say something. And admiration cannot conceal the fact that, suspecting duplicity on all hands, he permitted himself to say whatever seemed judicious at the moment with no respect for veracity. He even went so far on one occasion as to assert that the "government, under which we formerly were, both in Church and State, namely Monarchy, cannot possibly be admitted for the future in these nations." This was in a letter that he was persuaded to send from Leicester to some gentlemen of Devonshire who were making anxious inquiries. By the time he reached St. Albans he had received a messenger from Charles, given him a private interview, and sent him back to Breda, if with no assurances at least not discomfited.

Monk now achieved another master-stroke of policy. There were still in London, outnumber-

ing his own troops, the soldiers who had brought back the dissolved Parliament. The confusion of parties was already, as has been pointed out, inextricable, but it suited Monk's purpose not to see this. He knew that if his own army came into contact with that in London, trouble was likely. He had no fear that with the superior discipline of his forces he could in any case be beaten in action, but above all things he was determined to avoid any renewal of civil war. He therefore requested Parliament to provide quarters for his approaching army, and further that the troops now in London should be dispersed on scattered employments: "I conceive it not for your service that those soldiers . . . lately in rebellion against you, should mingle with your approved faithful regiments." That these same men had themselves been responsible for recalling the Parliament Monk adroitly ignored, and after the usual scene in the House his demands were conceded. No one at this stage was likely to refuse any demands that he might make, but it is engaging to notice the caution with which he contrived to invest each demand that in fact he did make with an air of sweet reason.

VI

On February 2 Monk reached Barnet, ten miles from London. He here learnt that the proclamation from Westminster to the troops had been received with threats of insurrection, which he

was summoned to proceed in all haste to suppress. Within twenty-four hours, however, Parliament had itself dealt with the situation, and on Friday, February 3, when Monk marched into Westminster, having first presented his humble duty to Lenthall whom he passed in the Strand, the city was free of disturbance. The citizens watched his progress without demonstration, wondering merely what this incalculable man would do. They sorely needed a deliverer, and he might now be passing before them, but they had long since learnt the folly of premature enthusiasms. Pepys, going from the Navy Office to Harper's for his "morning draft," was told there that the insurgent soldiery were quiet on the promise of a bonus. He walked through St. James's Park to Whitehall, where he found thirty or forty City apprentices who had been arrested for joining in the outbreak of the preceding day. After a little work at his office he took some friends at noon to show them the House in session, and found Monk installed in the Prince of Wales's apartments that had been reserved for him at Whitehall, and "saw all his forces march by in very good plight, and stout officers." Later in the day he heard that Monk "in passing through the town had many calls to him for a free Parliament, but little other welcome." The "town and guards," he found, were already "full of Monk's soldiers." And at dark he took another turn in the park, where Theophila Turner outran his wife and "another poor woman"

for a pot of ale. Evelyn on the same day "kept the fast," and noted that Monk was received with a profusion of addresses begging him to "settle the nation in some order, being at this time in most prodigious confusion, and under no government, everybody expecting what would be next and what he would do."

Monk's first employment in London was unpropitious, undertaken unavoidably against his own judgment. First the Commons instructed him to take the oath of "abjuration against Monarchy and the Stuart family." To write a letter to the squires of Devonshire was one thing, however, but to make a solemn public profession in this way quite another. By pleading that the question must be further investigated by all interests he succeeded in putting them off, much to their vexation. Their next demand could not be so easily evaded. The Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Common Council of London suddenly repudiated the Government, declaring that they would pay no more taxes until a "full and free Parliament" should assess them. This meant bankruptcy for the sitting Parliament, and Monk was directed to march into the city, break the gates and portcullises, remove the posts and chains from the streets, and arrest the ringleaders of the revolt. Monk knew this to be dangerous policy, if no worse, and he was, moreover, on terms of goodwill that he had every reason for wishing to preserve with the City itself. This, however, was an explicit military order, and to

disobey it would have been to commit himself to precisely the kind of irregularity that he had all along so sedulously avoided. He had no choice, therefore, and on February 9 he proceeded to execute his distasteful charge. Some of his officers resigned rather than carry out the duties allotted to them. The work began amid the protests of the citizens, and Monk, chewing tobacco and torn by misgivings, at length consented to listen to a deputation from what Evelyn mildly describes as the "exceedingly exasperated" city. "Controversy between enemies has nothing extraordinary in it, but to be ill-used by friends is very grievous"—such was the burden of their appeal, and Monk was affected by it. He promised to place the matter before the Parliament for reconsideration, and suspended the work of destruction.

Monk reported to Westminster that he had carried out his instructions up to a moment when it seemed to him that the City was prepared to come to any reasonable terms, and had then undertaken to submit proposals for a conference with Parliament, which he now did. The House was furious, and sent peremptory orders to Monk to do as he was told, and not interfere with civil administration. Again he accepted their authority, but this time with a much clarified motive. His men were with difficulty persuaded to return to work that was deeply repugnant to them, and the humour of the people was already unmistakable. Monk would still not infringe the letter of his respon-

sibility, but he was now convinced that it needed only another turn of the screw to provoke a public explosion of temper from which Parliament would be unable to recover. He trusted to his own position to make good his plea when this should happen that he had done nothing but follow his settled purpose of supporting established authority, a plea that would recommend him as he safely believed to whatever the next establishment might be. The House marked its approval of his return by voting him further perquisites, an act which is ingeniously held by some historians to testify to Monk's avarice. But the bribes betokened no confidence, and Monk now saw that the moment had come when he could no longer conceal his designs, which probably means that he had now finally to decide what his designs really were. He realised that he was regarded with fixed suspicion by the men who were according him favours, and with outraged resentment by the City. Also he learnt that while he was being acclaimed by the Commons they were exercising all their wits to find a means of dismissing him from his command and all influence. He did not fear them; but he understood that unless he made a decisive stroke his position with all parties would be rapidly undermined. He thereupon addessed a memorial to Parliament, signed by himself and fourteen of his officers, "expressive of the grievances and lawful desires of the country, and requiring their redress and satisfaction before a

certain day." This was, in effect, an ultimatum, and the Commons knew it; they knew also that they had no means of satisfying its terms. They denounced each other, they denounced Monk, while casting about for any expression with which they might yet mollify him. But Monk had no wish to be mollified, and without even waiting for an answer to his petition, he returned to the city and told the Lord Mayor that his previous unhappy visits had been undertaken against his will and affections, and that if his worship would summon the Common Council they would learn much to please them. The Council assembled at the Guildhall, and Monk, disregarding frantic appeals that were posted along the streets at the last moment from the House, informed them that his actions hitherto had been the necessary preliminaries of the step that he had now taken, that his goodwill towards the citizens was unbounded, that he was determined with them to restore the country to settled rule, and that he had that morning sent his letter to Westminster, insisting that writs should be issued "within seven days for the filling up of their House, and when filled to sit no longer than the 6th of May, but then to give place to a full and free Parliament." And to this end, he added, he had come to stay with them until they should see their aim accomplished.

The meeting was enraptured, and a fire of enthusiasm spread through the town. The thoroughly discredited Rump was on the eve of the last

of its many dissolutions. And the people, without knowing even yet what precisely would come of it all, felt that the man of decisive purpose was among them at last. Let the purpose act as it would, they were genuinely convinced that it would better, as it could not well impair their condition. Evelyn recorded this 11th of February as "a signal day," on which "the Rump Parliament (so called as retaining some few rotten members of the other) being dissolved . . . for joy whereof were many thousands of rumps roasted publicly in the streets at the bonfires this night, with ringing of bells and universal jubilee." Pepys saw Monk come out of the Guildhall with the Lord Mayor, and "such a shout I never heard in my life, crying 'God bless your Excellence.'" At night he took part in the rejoicings: "In Cheapside there was a great many bonfires, and Bow bells and all the bells in all the churches as we went home were a-ringing . . . numbers of bonfires, there being fourteen between St. Dunstan's and Temple Bar, and at Strand Bridge I could at one time tell thirty-one fires. In King Street seven or eight; and all along burning, and roasting, and drinking for rumps. There being rumps tied upon sticks and carried up and down. The butchers at the May Pole in the Strand rang a peal with their knives when they were going to sacrifice their rump. . . . Indeed it was past imagination, both the greatness and the suddenness of it."

VII

In the meantime Charles and his court, now at Brussels, were suffering agonies of uncertainty. When news came of Monk's first descent on the City, all their hopes seemed again to be ruined; when within a few hours they heard of his later pacific entry and the dissolution of the Rump, they thought, says Hyde, that "all their sufferings were over, and laid in a stock of such vast hopes as would have been very hard for any success to procure satisfaction for." One messenger reported that at the rump burnings the King's health had been freely drunk. But Monk, while he had by now said a great deal, had as yet ventured not a word about the restoration of monarchy. He had avoided taking the oath of proscription; but if at this time he had made up his mind that Charles must be brought back, he hardly let his most intimate friends into his secret, and when questioned openly on the matter repeatedly asserted that he was a loyal servant of the Commonwealth. Again it must be remembered that Monk's situation was one of extreme delicacy. Assuming that he meant to support Charles, a premature word of his intention would inevitably have ruined both the cause and himself. If people persisted in challenging him about it, they must have been very simple to expect any but the only possible answer. For some weeks, from his headquarters at Drapers' Hall, Monk watched and assisted in the endlessly

involved political manœuvres that preceded the assembling of the new Parliament. Amid all the turpitude and folly that dishonoured their negotiations, a few nobly tragic figures, such as that of Henry Vane the younger, who was later to perish for his republican faith, pass in mournful distinction. They believed that Monk was preparing the way for Charles, and they believed that this meant the destruction of everything for which their generation had paid so terrible a price. These able and pure spirits, the mighty Milton among them, passionately conceived that the return of Charles or, under the example of the Stuarts, of any king would be the veritable coming of anti-Christ. They could not foretell the subsequent progress of England's history, nor see that a restored monarchy, once it had been disciplined as it was to be, was the only effective instrument in this country for establishing the principles for which under Cromwell they had risen in judgment. Men like Monk and Montagu and Fairfax, who had been their associates and were now, as it seemed to them, betraying a sacred trust, had, it may be, little of their intrepid idealism, but they had a faculty for seeing facts as they were that was no less the salvation of their country in its present crisis than the spiritual wrath of the Puritan had been twenty years before. To confuse the real and abiding consequences of the Restoration with the levities of Charles's court is,

it need hardly be said, wholly to disregard historical perspective.

VIII

Before the end of February the reorganised House that was to function until May 6, received City representatives who brought assurances of loyalty and of a considerable loan, and the leader of the deputation could by now go as far as to say, "Some persons are for a monarchy; some for a commonwealth; and some for no government at all. The last we dislike; for the others, we shall not presume to direct, but shall acquiesce and submit to the determination of Parliament." The hardly veiled intention of this passed without reproof, and the Speaker conveyed to them the "very hearty thanks" of the Parliament. The House thereupon returned to its affairs, indulging excesses of its own, chiefly of religious persecution, that were to embitter the life of the country for generations to come. It was, in fact, no wiser or honester than the Parliaments that it succeeded, but it has the distinction of having builded better than it knew. It was the means whereby the first stage of a process necessary for England was conducted. And while it cultivated the temper that was soon to make the Restoration possible, the great City companies vied with each other in entertaining Monk; at their festivities the royal arms replaced those of the Commonwealth, while the toast of the

King was openly honoured. And still their guest did not acquiesce; but he did not leave the table.

For some time the old Republicans staved off any official act that would countenance Charles's hopes. It was they also who bade for Monk's favour and sought to compromise him by proposing in the House that he should be given Hampton Court; he was far too shrewd to accept this offer of becoming the possessor of sequestered royal property, and the extent to which his power had now risen is shown by the fact that he was able to turn the occasion to account by intimating that he would take twenty thousand pounds instead, which sum was thereupon voted to him. But popular sentiment was daily growing more accustomed to the idea of monarchy; even people who could not tolerate the idea of Charles as king felt that a king of some sort there must be, and irresponsible agitations were started for putting Richard Cromwell, or even Monk himself, on the throne. Step by step all parties realised the inevitable conclusion to which events were leading, and, the few irreconcilables excepted, began to compete in preparing what measures they could for securing their credit against the coming change. In the middle of March the House abolished the oath "I do declare and promise that I will be true and faithful to the Commonwealth of England, as the same is now established, without a King or House of Lords," and dissolved itself by issuing writs for the new Parliament as had been stipulated by

Monk. At this moment Milton wrote a disregarded letter to Monk solemnly charging him to preserve the Commonwealth, while on March 16 Pepys wrote in his diary, "yesterday, about five o'clock in the afternoon, one came with a ladder to the Great Exchange, and wiped with a brush the inscription that was upon King Charles (Exit tyrannus, Regum ultimus, anno libertatis Angliæ, anno Domini 1648 Januariæ XXX), and . . . there was a great bonfire made in the Exchange, and people called out 'God bless King Charles the Second.'" During the last debate of the Long Parliament one speaker created a scene by demanding that "before we dissolve ourselves, we should bear witness against the horrid murder of the King, and protest that we had neither hand nor heart in that affair," and within a week Monk had given a private audience to an emissary from Charles.

IX

This audience marked a crisis in English history. After fencing for a time in order to satisfy himself of his visitor's credentials and discretion, Monk addressed him in these notable words: "I hope the King will forgive what is past, both in my words and actions, according to the contents of his gracious letter; for my heart was ever faithful to him, but I was never in a condition to do him service till now; and you shall assure his Majesty that I am now not only ready to obey his

commands, but to sacrifice my life and fortune in his service." The envoy was one of Monk's own kinsmen, Sir John Grenville, and another, of Monk's household, William Morice, had guarded the door during the interview. He was now called in to witness Monk's declaration, which Grenville asked should be in writing. Monk refused this, on grounds of reasonable prudence, and Grenville was told to call next day with a memorandum of the conversation, which Monk would approve before the envoy returned to Charles. He recorded Monk's proposals as being that if the Restoration were effected a general amnesty should be granted, that the sale or gift of confiscated lands should be ratified, that liberty of conscience should be allowed to all subjects, and that in the meantime Charles should at once leave Flanders in order that there should be no fear of Spanish influence, which his friends in England greatly mistrusted. After discussion on these matters, and assured that Grenville had committed all the terms to memory, Monk burnt the memorandum. Grenville then told him that he was empowered to offer the general a blank cheque on Charles's favours, but this Monk astutely declined, knowing very well that payment in advance would weaken his influence. When Grenville reached Brussels he found that other assurances had also been received by Charles. Lenthall had written a letter of advice and allegiance, the deputation of ministers, whose leader overheard the King's

pious devotions, had arrived, memorials had been received from the City, and from Montagu speaking for the fleet. All interests, civil, political, and religious, were in fact gathering on Charles's doorstep, and Hyde quickly saw that the King would now come into his own without having to be too literal in pledges. Anglican prelates, Presbyterian leaders, women of fashion, soldiers, wealthy merchants, hack pamphleteers, sober statesmen, and public adventurers were all flitting about dark corners, dashing along the highways, and scrambling for information in an hourly confusion of intrigue during the early days of April 1660. Monk, on the rising tide, was far from being safely there, and was in constant danger of assassination; there is reason to believe that he was in fact on one occasion poisoned.

X

Mazarin, the most reliable political weathercock in Europe, now approached Monk and was politely told that his attentions were not wanted. England was capable of making her own decisions, and the only authority whose will was of any consequence was the new Parliament shortly to assemble. There, and there only, would the choice between a commonwealth and a monarchy be made, and to put it with the humblest submission, foreign cardinals who thought to tamper with the intention of a plain English soldier were wasting their time.

Charles, on receiving Monk's message, prepared to leave Brussels for Breda in Holland. But the Spaniards, like Mazarin, perceived that the Restoration was now assured, and had no mind to part with the guest who had suddenly become so important. So considerate were they that a squadron of cavalry was placed outside Charles's lodging to attend him as a guard of honour wherever he should move; but he had not been a fugitive after Worcester for nothing, and in the darkness of one early morning he slipped out under their noses, and was well on his way to the frontier before his absence was discovered. Grenville was waiting for him on his arrival in Holland, and there receiving his dispatches for England, returned to Monk. A few days later Charles at Breda received the first letter that Monk had written to him, and learnt that Lambert had taken the field in a last desperate bid for republican supremacy; he learnt also that if this enterprise should be attended by any success Monk was prepared "to put off all disguise, declare the King's commission, own it for the authority by which I act, and call the Royal party to arms in all places through England, Scotland, and Ireland." On Easter Sunday, April 22, Lambert's rising collapsed at Daventry, his men refusing to fight and himself being made prisoner. "He was taken in Northamptonshire by Colonel Ingoldsby at the head of a party," records Pepys on the 24th, "by which means their whole design is broke, and things now

very open and safe. And every man begins to be merry and full of hopes." Lambert was committed to the Tower, and the last demonstration of the expiring Commonwealth had been made.

Royalist fanatics now raised their voices in hysterical demands for vengeance, but were firmly and wisely disowned by the responsible leaders of the party, backed by Charles himself. These leaders openly acclaimed Monk as the saviour of the country. They justly thanked God that He had allowed this great man to lead the people through so many trials and discouragements to the restoration of civil peace without the shedding of blood, and announced that they were determined to acknowledge this mercy by making reconciliation the aim of future government. Monk hereafter will take little active part in our story, but we cannot leave him without observing how deeply this testimony was deserved. It cannot be doubted that for six months preceding the Restoration it was he who chiefly directed the fortunes of England, and it can hardly less be doubted that his precise combination of qualities, and that alone, kept the country from a renewal of civil war in that period of turmoil and passion. He received large emoluments and high preferment, but if ever a public servant earned his rewards he did, and of the many noble houses founded at the Restoration none had a more honourable origin than that of the Dukes of Albemarle.

Monk's officers, alarmed by Lambert's abortive

but significant rising, begged Monk at once to raise the King's standard, and so acquire for himself and his army the lustre of inaugurating an event that was now known to be inevitable. He told them with his unfailing sagacity, that the proclamation must be made by the civil and not the military power. On Wednesday, April 25, the new Parliament met, five hundred and sixty-one members in the Commons, and ten in the resuscitated House of Lords. Monk sat as member for Devon, and the next day he received the unfeigned thanks of both Houses. As he stood in the Commons listening while the Speaker addressed him, a messenger was waiting outside. It was Grenville, with a letter from Charles addressed "To our trusty and well-beloved General Monk, to be by him communicated to the President and Council of State, and to the officers of the armies under his command." Monk immediately placed it, unread, before the President. It was decided that Parliament alone was the proper authority to receive it, and May 1 fixed as the day on which it should be presented. The following unpublished letter[1] from Thurloe to Montagu gives the account of an eye-witness:

My Lord,

This day have beene read in the house of Commons 2 letters from the Kinge, one directed to the house itselfe, and the other to the generall Monk, they consisted in 4 points, A generall Act of oblivion to all persons, save such as the parlmnt shall except, provided they do within 40 dayes signifie

[1] Sandwich MSS.

their acceptance of this pardon, by some publique Act. 2. To confirm the sales in such manner as the 2 houses shall advise. 3^{y} to grant liberty of conscience & 4^{ly} to pay the arrears of the Army & to receive them into the pay and service. The House upon the readinge thereof expressed a great sense of satisfaction, and ordered a committee to draw up an answer to the Kinge's letter, expressinge therein the great and joyful sense they have of his Ma'^{ties} gratious offer, returninge him humble thanks for the same, promisinge a speedy answer to his propositions, and givinge assurances of their duty and loyalty; the Lords had alsoe a letter, to the same effect, they voted a returne of thanks, that the Government ought to be and is in the Kinge and 2 houses, that the cause of all our miseries of late hath been the separation of the head from the body. And that a committee of both houses be appointed to consider of fittinge expedients for unitinge them again, those words beinge communicated to the house of commons, they concurred therein, so that your lordship by this will understand where the Government resides now; this is all one dayes work, the Generall hath leave to make his owne answer to the Kinge without communicating it to the houses. The letter the Kinge wrote to him he read this afternoon to some of his officers, who (as I am told) expressed rare delight of it. I am Y^{r} Lordship's most hu^{ble} & faithfull serv^{t}

Jo Thurloe.

May 1, 1660.

The letters, drafted by Hyde, to the Lords and the Commons, were received with an uproar of enthusiasm in which it was voted that "according to the ancient and fundamental laws of this Kingdom, the government is and ought to be by King, Lords and Commons." The third letter, to the Army, Monk read to his officers in St. James's Palace. At the same time Montagu received a letter of similar import at Gravesend, where it was read by Pepys on the flagship to the assembled commanders of the fleet. On Thursday, May 3,

1660, Edward Montagu writes in his diary, "The King's letter and Declaration were read aboard the Fleete and the whole Fleete unanimously declared their loyalty unto His Ma^{ty}." Yet another communication was read by the Lord Mayor to the Common Council of the City. Everywhere the name of the King was shouted out in a crescendo of excitement. Evelyn's diary for May 3 exclaims, "Came the most happy tidings of his Majesty's gracious declaration and applications to the Parliament, General, and People, and their dutiful acceptance and acknowledgement, after a most bloody and unreasonable rebellion of near twenty years. Praised be for ever the Lord of Heaven, who only doeth wondrous things, because His Mercy endureth for ever." The Restoration had been effected, and there was now nothing but to arrange formalities for Charles's return.

XI

Six Commissioners from the Lords, headed by the Earl of Manchester, and twelve from the Commons, Fairfax among them, were appointed to convey the loyal assurances of the Parliament to Charles at Breda. They were accompanied by a host of private enthusiasts anxious to pay homage and bespeak any scraps of royal favour that they could. Out of compliment to Monk, his wife's brother, Dr. Clarges, was allowed to make the first departure, carrying the General's own letter to Charles from the Army. The King's

agents warned Hyde that Clarges should be treated with all civility, but not admitted to state secrets, Monk not having made him privy to these, and recommended that "to please Mrs. Monk, who indeed is a very excellent woman and perfectly a friend to the King, but very indulgent to her relations," the doctor should be knighted on leaving court. Public bodies, from the City downward, sent deputations, and for several days continuous processions of traffic crossed and recrossed the North Sea. Charles, his throne assured, his pockets filled with money, to the extent of some fifty thousand pounds, that poured in on him from Parliament, from the city companies, and from private persons, courted by all influences from home and by by ambassadors from the leading powers of Europe, behaved with admirable public sense, and provoked Hyde in private by treating it all as uncommonly good fun.

XII

On May 8 Charles was proclaimed in London, first at Westminster, then before the palace in Whitehall. The members of both Houses, the Speaker and Monk leading them, proceeded to Temple Bar, and were there received by the Lord Mayor, who caused the gates to be opened and admitted the heralds to proclaim the King at various points in the City. Pepys, with the fleet, celebrated the occasion by losing fourteen shillings at nine-pins and treating his company to libations

of Margate ale. On the 15th Charles, accompanied by his court and "more than five hundred English gentlemen on horseback," entered the Hague. Here he passed a week of highly serious ceremony, receiving deputations, hearing addresses, and exchanging congratulations, but the entertainment of the King, which was "incredibly noble and splendid," was by no means lacking in diversions. Everybody was enchanted with his behaviour; peers, commons, and citizens alike found him highly obliging and accessible, and were convinced that there was no reason "to fear any bitterness from so princely and generous a nature." Knighthoods were as the sparks that fly upward. Only the Presbyterian ministers went away dejected at his obstinacy with regard to the Prayer Book and surplices, and with misgivings that the young King was a mulish person. The triumphs of the day were succeeded by festivals at night, in which Charles shared with an assured tact of familiar authority. And here we may for a moment observe the more notable members of the court attending Charles as he received that brilliant homage.

CHAPTER VII

RESTORATION: PART II

CHAPTER VII

Restoration. Part II

I

FIRST there was the Lord Chancellor of England, Sir Edward Hyde, still but forty-one years of age. The son of a good and substantial family, he had nevertheless to enter a profession, and achieved early successes in the law. As a young man he made the acquaintance, not only of rank, but of genius, attracting the favourable attention of Ben Jonson, who, as Hyde himself says, for many years showed him "an extraordinary kindness," until he found that his disciple "betook himself to business, which he believed ought never to be preferred before his company." John Selden, Charles Cotton, Kenelm Digby and Thomas Carew, Lucius Carey and Sidney Godolphin, were among his familiars, and from his youth he moved with ease and distinction even in such company. At the age of thirty-three, on no other recommendation than his own proved talents and character, he was taken into the private counsels of Charles I, who learnt to rely with particular confidence upon the opinion of "Ned Hyde." In an age when the strongest convictions were readily

stampeded, Hyde showed neither flexibility nor caprice. His loyalties were always secure against interest and difficulty, and he set no terms to what he was convinced to be his duty. A profound and witty, if intensely prejudiced, judge of character, a statesman of shrewd decision and imperturbable patience, a man whom it was difficult to provoke and impossible to deceive, he has left an invaluable and splendidly amassed account of himself and his times in his *History* and *Life*. But his eminent and rare virtues had to contend with more dubious qualities, of which he makes his own ingenuous revelation. He was, not offensively but inescapably, a good deal of a prig. We can hear him explaining that he must not waste any more time with Ben Jonson, and imagine what Ben's retort might be. He can fall from the prettiest fancy to the most humourless contemplation of his own merits; candour is straining beyond its commission when a man writes of himself thus: "That which supported and rendered him generally acceptable was his generosity . . . and the opinion men had of the goodness and justice of his nature, which was transcendent in him, in a wonderful tenderness and delight in obliging. His integrity was ever without blemish, and believed to be above temptation."[1] The most admirable feature of which, and of many similar passages, must be allowed to be its truth. His loyalty, again, noble as it was, could be a strangely blind one. Hyde

[1] Hyde uses the third person of himself throughout his writings.

was one of the great precursors of Toryism in England, rather in character than in ideas. Having pledged his faith to the King, he was willing to accept with bland docility the doctrine that the King could do no wrong. His friendship with Laud could obscure from him the dangerous folly of ecclesiastical ambitions in the state, and an ineradicable party bias lay under the self-sufficiency with which Grammont charges him. Of his relations with Charles II in exile this narrative has told; of his later decline, so miserable in all its aspects, we shall hear presently. His disapproval of Charles's personal irregularities was probably not very deep, and the affection between the two men was real. Charles had bridled often enough under the stiff direction of his mentor, but knew how sterling was the courage that had served him. Moreover, formidable moralist as Hyde could be, he was no marplot in the graces of society, and even gout had not changed the natural taste of the apologist who said of himself in 1635, "he indulged his palate very much, and took even some delight in eating and drinking well, but without any approach to luxury." As he now watched, and participated in, the ceremonies at the Hague, and saw the power of Europe on its knees before his master, no pride can have been extravagant with which he reflected on his own share in this astonishing turn of fortune.

II

Hardly less intimate was the satisfaction of James Butler, Marquis of Ormond. His gallantry in enterprise had been the complement of Hyde's careful statesmanship, and they had worked together with a mutual confidence that neither misfortune nor intrigue could impair. Ormond's royalism was of a character distinct from Hyde's. The Chancellor had early in his career entered the King's service more or less by accident. There he found full play for his personal sympathies and the natural bent of his mind. Having once professed his allegiance, no disaster could shake him from it, and to the end of his days his loyalty was a principle. Ormond's was an inspired emotion. Bred of a long line of nobility, an undaunted championship of the Crown was his natural heritage. It is true that being an Irishman he could sometimes be impatient in his fealty, and when as a young man he was challenged at the door of Strafford's Parliament in Dublin to deliver up his sword, he told the usher that if he repeated the demand he should have it "in his guts." Strafford used the incident to confirm an inherited affection, and no man gave himself more impetuously to the Stuart cause. It is conceivable that circumstances might have led Hyde in his young manhood to join the party of Hampden and Milton; there was in him, uncompromising as his royalist policy was to be, much of the character that made

the Puritan revolution. But Ormond was a Cavalier through and through. Of Hyde's stern middle-class probity he knew nothing; he was governed by the romantic code of honour that had come down in his blood from the age of chivalry. He was brave, but he could be rash in a way that often shocked Hyde's prudent mind. Also his habits were often little to Hyde's more frugal taste. Evelyn left the King's table one evening when Ormond had already won a thousand pounds. Burnet says of him that he "was in every way fitted for a Court; of a graceful appearance, a lively wit, and a cheerful temper; a man of great expense, but decent even in his vices." Grammont speaks of the splendour of his merit, his wit, and the nobleness of his manners. But for all this, he had not hesitated to face every bitterness of exile with Hyde in the King's service, and never can principle and chivalry have met more notably in a common fortitude. To look at the portraits of the two men is to see a shrewd immobile statesman beside a zealous visionary, and as such they shared their triumph at The Hague. Both men deserved the signal honour of being admitted by Dryden in *Absalom and Achitophel* to the "small but faithful band of Worthies in the Breach who dar'd to stand." Barzillai is Ormond:

> In this short File Barzillai first appears;
> Barzillai crown'd with Honour and with Years:
>
> . . . . .
>
> Unfortunately Brave to buoy the State;
> But sinking underneath his Master's Fate;

In Exile with his God-like Prince he Mourn'd,
For him he Suffer'd, and with him Return'd.
The Court he practis'd, not the Courtier's Art:
Large was his Wealth, but larger even his Heart.

And of Hyde as Hushai, David being Charles, we hear:

Hushai the friend of David in distress,
In publick storms of manly stedfastness;
By Foreign Treaties he inform'd his Youth;
And join'd Experience to his Native Truth.
His frugal care supplied the wanting Throne;
Frugal for that, but bounteous of his own.

It can hardly be said that Hyde had pursued a consistent policy during the past ten years, since for the greater part of that time it had been beyond the resources of the exiled court to maintain any effective policy at all. Charles had been able to pick up a mite of civility here and there, but as he wandered about the Continent he found himself of small credit in the designs of a Europe over which lay the shadow of Cromwell's power. If, however, Hyde's faith and patience can scarcely be termed a policy, they had sustained him in a belief that must have often seemed but cold comfort to his master and his friends. If he could in those days of waiting do nothing constructive for the cause of which more than any other mind his was the ballast, he at least saw as no on else did that any rashness of enterprise would be a fatal blunder, and with steady persistence he opposed it. His was a slow husbanding of every grain of

advantage that might be gleaned from a field of ruined hopes; a favourable opinion here, a promise there, a trifling obligation imposed where there might presently be repayment with handsome interest, some indiscretion of Cromwell's government adroitly stressed in likely quarters. Knowing his statesmanship to be bankrupt of authority, he nevertheless kept an undivided aim before him in spite of overwhelming discouragement, and the plan, such as it was, that was now so splendidly realised at The Hague had been of his conception, and with Ormond he had done all that could be done to control its progress. The other executive members of Charles's court had been either doubtful adornments such as Buckingham, or loyal if pedestrian officials such as Sir Edward Nicholas, "a very honest and industrious man, and always versed in business, . . . a person of very good reputation, and of singular integrity," which testimony from Hyde is supplemented on another occasion by an affectionate reference to "the good old secretary Nicholas."

One friend that had followed Charles throughout adversity did not live to participate in his returning fortune. Little is heard of Henry Wilmot, first Earl of Rochester, after his visit to England in connection with "The Start." He got back safely to the Continent, but died at Sluys on February 19, 1658. His character was not impressive; on the occasions when he was entrusted with important missions he distinguished himself

neither in behaviour nor judgment, and his excesses were sufficiently scandalous to shock even the minor courts of Germany, which may perhaps in itself be counted as a distinction. But he had been true to his colours, and for the hardy days of his escape with Charles from Worcester, if for nothing else, we could wish that he had been spared to display himself in the sunshine of the Restoration. At his death he was succeeded by his son John, the poet of whom we shall hear later, and at this time a boy of twelve at Wadham College Oxford.

III

If George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham, the disreputable son of a disreputable father, had not written *The Rehearsal,* it would be difficult to find a circumstance to record in his favour. If Lely's portrait is to be trusted, he had not even the personal graces that accentuated his father's notoriety; Lely, indeed, shows us a countenance of unredeemed coarseness. Grammont, who tells us that Buckingham was "seduced by too good an opinion of his own merit," dissents from Lely with the statement that he was "extremely handsome," while Burnet reports him as "a man of noble presence." But Lely's brush was deliberate; for coarseness was characteristic of a man whose profligacy was without glamour, whose animosities knew no scruples, and whose political ambitions were marked neither by honour nor competence. The pietistic bias of Burnet's mind makes

it necessary to accept his opinion of restoration character with caution, but no allowance can bring Buckingham creditably out of an indictment such as this: "He had no principles of religion, virtue, or friendship. . . . He was true to nothing; for he was not true to himself. He had no steadiness nor conduct; he could keep no secret, nor execute any design without spoiling it. . . . He was bred about the King, and for many years he had a great ascendant over him; but he spake of him to all persons with that contempt, that at last he drew a lasting disgrace upon himself. And he at length ruined both body and mind, fortune and reputation equally." Pepys, in his lighter, more temperate manner, confirms this impression, recording it as a miracle when for once Buckingham is persuaded that he is in the wrong, and expressing astonishment when some sign of his popular favour is shown. But that Buckingham had wit even Burnet allows, and a talent for ridicule such as is shown in *The Rehearsal,* combined with great wealth and undoubted influence, was assured of ready flattery. Skilled in the arts of innuendo and scandal, an adept in seduction, and wholly shameless in his conduct, he was a natural leader of the levities and debauchery of his age. The story of his affair with the infamous Lady Shrewsbury is symptomatic of his career, and is one of sordid brutality in which hired ruffians and the doing to death of an amiable and inoffensive husband are incidents in a general atmosphere of insolent

cruelty. The private life of Buckingham, in short, reveals nothing in extenuation of its disgrace.

Nor were his public activities more admirable. Of the political issue in which he involved himself it is not the purpose of this study to speak, but every interference that he made in matters of government supported Burnet's observation that he could execute no design without spoiling it. An opportunist without discrimination, cunning without courage and devoted wholly to self-interest, he thrust himself into state business with an effrontery that exhausted the indulgence even of his most accommodating friends. A note in the Earl of Sandwich's journal shows us Buckingham in a mood of childish petulance that was habitual with him and suggests the flutter of jealousy in which he lived: "April 1665. Wednesday 12. The Duke of Buckingham being on board the *Charles,* and a councell of Warr being held in the afternoone whereunto he was not called (as I have heard) he expostulated it with the Duke [of York] that he ought to be admitted as being a Privy Councellor, and also for his qualitye sake the Duke of Monmouth beinge alwaies present in councells of warr: but the Duke tellinge him he could not doe it without the Kinge's order, the Duke of Buck[m] went up that day to London to receive the Kinge's pleasure."[1] The result of the appeal we are not told.

[1] Sandwich MSS.

Evelyn preserves what might seem to be a studied silence concerning Buckingham, referring to him but twice, and then in disparagement. But Evelyn impairs his own credit in this instance as a witness by the entry dated December 14, 1672, "Went to see the Duke of Buckingham's ridiculous farce and rhapsody, called *The Recital,* buffooning all plays, yet profane enough." It was trifling of Evelyn not to know the name of *The Rehearsal* a year after its production, but beyond that it was wilfully inept to dismiss a comic masterpiece as insignificant. It is by his play, and that alone, that Buckingham has any claim upon the esteem of posterity. The question of his authorship is, indeed, not wholly beyond dispute, but whatever assistance he may have received from Butler and other wits of the time, there can be no reasonable doubt that the work was substantially his. Mr. Montague Summers, who has edited *The Rehearsal* with his usual scholarship and good sense,[1] presents the evidence on this point fairly enough. But while *The Rehearsal* gave Buckingham an assured place among satirists, it also provided the occasion for a scathing and immortal exposure of his own character by a greater master in the same art. The general ridicule that was the inspiration of *The Rehearsal* was concentrated on Dryden in the person of Bayes. Dryden, one of the most complex characters in English poetry, was, with his vagaries of mood and affection, an

[1] Shakespeare Head Press, 1914.

admirable mark for the lampoonist, and Buckingham made brilliant use of an ample opportunity. But Bayes of *The Rehearsal* is no more than a highly diverting parody of the defects that were notorious in the character of a great man. When Dryden retaliated with the Zimri of his *Absalom and Achitophel* in 1681, he cut right down to the fundamental character itself of Buckingham with crushing effect.

> Some of their Chiefs were Princes of the Land;
> In the first Rank of these did Zimri stand:
> A man so various, that he seem'd to be
> Not one, but all Mankind's Epitome.
> Stiff in Opinions, always in the wrong;
> Was Everything by starts, and Nothing long:
> But, in the course of one revolving Moon,
> Was Chymist, Fidler, States-man, and Buffoon;
> Then all for Women, Painting, Rhiming, Drinking,
> Besides ten thousand Freaks that died in thinking.
> Blest Madman, who could every hour employ,
> With something New to wish, or to enjoy!
> Railing and praising were his usual Theams;
> And both (to shew his Judgment) in Extreams:
> So over Violent, or over Civil,
> That every Man, with him, was God or Devil.
> In squandring Wealth was his peculiar Art:
> Nothing went unrewarded, but Desert.
> Beggar'd by fools, whom still he found too late:
> He had his Jest, and they had his Estate.
> He laugh'd himself from Court; then sought Relief
> By forming Parties, but could ne'r be Chief. . . .

Bayes remains a parody of unquestionable wit and discernment, but Zimri is a life-study, drawn with inimitable power, of a man to parody whom there was no necessity.

That Buckingham had an immense influence upon Charles's character and conduct there can be no question. The King's elder by two years, he found in the master with whom he spent his boyhood and youth a ready follower in his own undisciplined courses from the first. That Charles could ever have been anything but indulgent of his own desires is improbable, but if any one man was the instrument of debauching those desires it was Buckingham. Of loyalty to Charles after the Restoration he had none, and at no time was the King deceived as to his ability or honour as a state counsellor. But the personal association formed in early days never quite lost its unhappy force, and few of the more deplorable scenes in the life of the restored monarchy are untouched by the evil genius of Buckingham. Indignation about Charles's gallantries and mistresses is more often simulated than real, but there were occasions when gallantry was degraded into heartless squalor, and it was by such occasions that the long and lamentable familiarity between Charles and Buckingham was bound; it was in them, almost exclusively it might be said, that Buckingham had his being. Of the finer qualities in which, for all its frailty, the nature of Charles was rich, his obscene favourite knew nothing. There is a terrible passage in Pepys, with which we may take our leave of this theme once and for all: "Creed told me this day [July 18, 1668] how when the King was at my Lord Cornwallis's [at Culford in

Suffolk] when he went last to Newmarket, that being there on a Sunday, the Duke of Buckingham did, in the afternoon, to please the King, make a bawdy sermon to him out of Canticles, and that my Lord Cornwallis did endeavour to get the King a whore, and that must be a pretty girl, the daughter of the parson of the place, but that she did get away, and leaped off of some place and killed herself, which if true is very sad." We may hope that rumour was exaggerating, but this was the aspect of Restoration life that Buckingham adorned. He died at the age of sixty, and was buried in Westminster Abbey.

IV

Assembled also with Charles at The Hague were most of the members of his own family. Of his mother, Henrietta Maria, little need be added to what has already been said. Her obstinate intrigues to establish a popish influence in England had come to nothing, and she was no more than a formal spectator of a triumph that would have taken place in very different conditions if she could have had her way. She returned to England and lived at the court for five years, but drifted back to the Continent and continued to nurse a brood of futile schemes until her death in 1669. With her now were her five surviving children—Charles himself, Mary (born 1631), widow of William II of Orange, James, Duke of York (born 1633), Henry, Duke of Gloucester (born 1639), and Hen-

rietta Anne (born 1644). Mary had befriended her brother to the best of her ability throughout his exile, and his recovery of the English throne was genuinely more than a political satisfaction to her. Her son William, now a child of ten, and presently to succeed his uncle James as William III, was also present. It is interesting to remember that James was also to become this boy's father-in-law, and that the mother of the Mary who shared the throne on the Orange succession was no other than Anne Hyde, Clarendon's daughter. In the year of her brother's restoration Princess Mary visited England, and there died of small-pox, a fate that was also to befall her daughter-in-law thirty-five years later. On December 21, 1660, Pepys notes "how dangerously ill the Princess Royal is," and refers to an unconfirmed rumour that she had married Henry Jermyn, a nephew of the notorious secretary. On the 24th she died, "much fault" being "laid upon the doctors" for her death, and on Christmas Day Evelyn heard his friend Dr. Earle preach the funeral sermon at Westminster Abbey. In a gentle way the Princess had played a not unimportant part in the history of her time, but she had left but a faint impression of personality. Charles must have felt her loss, having towards her both affection and gratitude, but in general we may believe Burnet that she "was not much lamented." Burnet speaks of her as having passed some years in reputable widowhood until she was persuaded by her in-

defatigable mother that Louis XIV might marry her, when she went to Paris, lived above her means, squandered her fortune, "and was not only disappointed of her vain expectation, but fell into some misfortunes that brought a tarnish upon her character."

Henry, Duke of Gloucester, like his sister fell a victim to small-pox in 1660, at the age of twenty-one. "He was," says Burnet, "active and loved business, and had a kind, insinuating temper that was generally very acceptable. He would have made a great man; but the mirth and entertainments of that time raised his blood so high that he took the small-pox, of which he died, much lamented by all, but chiefly by the King; for he loved him better than the Duke of York, and was never in his whole life so much concerned as he was on this occasion." He died on September 13, and again Pepys records, "by the great negligence of the doctors." Contemporary opinion agreed with Burnet in regarding him as a young man of high virtue and promise. To Evelyn he was "a prince of extraordinary hopes," and Hyde speaks of "the comeliness and gracefulness of his person, and the vivacity and vigour of his wit and understanding, which made him much spoken of." Before joining his mother in France, whence, as we have seen, he was removed by Charles, he had been under tutelage in the Isle of Wight, and while there he was addressed always as Mr. Harry. Little though we know of him, there are few

Top. CATHERINE OF BRAGANZA, QUEEN TO CHARLES II (*By Jan Roettier*)

Left. BARBARA VILLIERS, DUCHESS OF CLEVELAND (*By Sir Peter Lely*)

Right. LOUISE DE KEROUAL, DUCHESS OF PORTSMOUTH (*By Pierre Mignard in the National Portrait Gallery*)

Bottom. NELL GWYN (*By Sir Peter Lely in the National Portrait Gallery*)

figures of his time who have left so fragrant a memory.

Henrietta Anne, aged sixteen, was to take a part of some consequence in Anglo-French policy as the Duchess of Orleans, which she became in the following year. "La Belle Henriette," when she came to London in November 1660, struck Pepys as being "very pretty," but, he adds, "much below my expectations; and her dressing of herself with her hair frized short up to her ears, did make her seem so much the less to me," and he found his wife, standing near "with two or three black patches on, and well-dressed," much the handsomer of the two. She later conducted negotiations between her brother-in-law, Louis XIV, and her brother Charles, of which we shall hear, distinguished herself by befriending Racine, Corneille, and Molière, and died at the age of twenty-six, the usual rumours of poison being more than commonly insistent.

V

At the Restoration, James, then Duke of York and afterwards James II, was twenty-seven years old. It was in the long controversy on the succession, and in his subsequent reign and deposition, that his public character was to be tested with no very impressive results, and a genius far beyond his scope would have been necessary to give his bid for Catholic authority in England the smallest hope of success. Of genius, indeed, he had none,

differing in this as in all other respects from his brother Charles. But in character short of this degree he was by no means deficient, and by 1660 it had come far towards maturity. Far more susceptible to opinion and far more careful of appearances than the King, he preserved an outward gravity that often passed for stable wisdom, and was the origin on more than one occasion of designs, to which there is no reason to suppose that he was a party, to advance him at his brother's expense. He had the personal courage which none of the Stuarts lacked, being, as Pepys tells us, a "desperate huntsman," and he was justly noted for intrepidity in a crisis. He was highly praised by Turenne, under whom he served as a volunteer in France. Pepys, to whom he showed much kindness, speaks of him with repeated admiration, commending his "good management and discretion," and observing that he "do give himself up to business, and is like to prove a noble Prince," at the same time regretting that Charles did not seem to give himself up to business in the least. "He was," says Burnet, "naturally candid and sincere, though somewhat eager and revengeful, and a very firm friend," a view shared by Grammont, who calls him "a faithful friend, and an implacable enemy." Burnet also records his desire to understand business, which, however, was not equalled by his capacity. He was prudent without parsimony, and lived amply without exceeding his resources. Hyde, whose daughter Anne the Duke

had secretly married in 1659, though it was not until October 1660 that public acknowledgment of the event was made, while noting an irresolution and a subjection to persons rather than to arguments in his son-in-law, nevertheless could leave a tolerant portrait of a man through whom he suffered what was perhaps the greatest grief of his life, when his daughter was led by her husband's influence to join the Roman Church.

James thus acquired a reputation that was not wholly consonant with his true character. He passed for a sober, punctilious—Grammont states that he had "an inviolable attachment for his word"—industrious, and open-minded prince. But time was to show that no one could move with subtler cunning in the labyrinth of political intrigue than he, and his private life was, in fact, no more constant than that of others—Charles notably, for example—by whom constancy was never flattered. James had his merits; he was a diligent administrator of the fleet, and an able, some say a masterly commander. Also his affection for Anne Hyde was sincere and lasting, so much so as to be "the public discourse and commendation" in a society of light attachments, and it required some courage in the heir-apparent to stand by such a contract with a commoner when he was influentially urged to conceal it. But between the domestic virtue of his father and the undisguised practices of his brother, James contrived to find a convenient mean. If he was to

prove a far fonder husband than Charles, he seems not to have been a more faithful one. "He was," says Burnet, "perpetually in one amour or other, and without being very nice in his choice: upon which the King once said he believed his brother had his mistresses given him by his priests for penance." Neither Charles nor James was given to drunkenness, but once at least the circumspect younger brother kept glasses with the elder until all the company, according to Pepys, "fell a-crying for joy, being all maudlin and kissing one another, the King the Duke of York, and the Duke of York the King: and in such a maudlin pickle as never people were: and so passed the day." But James seldom forgot himself, in this or any other respect, and we may be sure that at The Hague as he received his share of returning homage his conduct was exemplary. If there was in the King something of Charles Surface and Tom Jones, there was no less in James of Joseph and Blifil.

VI

Also with the royal family was Elizabeth, Queen of Bohemia, daughter of James I and so the King's aunt. At the age of sixty-four she had herself known a lifetime of misfortunes, and was to become a somewhat pathetic pensioner for two years at the Restoration court, dying in 1662. Pepys called upon her on May 17, 1660, and found her "a very debonaire, but a plain lady," a sufficiently startling description of one who some forty years

before had inspired Wotton to the lyric splendour of:

> You meaner beauties of the night,
> That poorly satisfy our eyes,
> More by your number than your light,
> You common people of the skies,
> What are you when the moon shall rise?
> . . . . .
> So when my mistress shall be seen
> In form and beauty of her mind,
> By virtue first, then choice, a Queen,
> Tell me if she were not designed
> The eclipse and glory of her kind.

Her son, Prince Rupert, now forty-one years of age, was not present at The Hague celebrations, being engaged on service elesewhere, but his fortunes were so closely allied to those of the court circle that his figure is needed to complete the group. Something has been said of his conduct as an officer in the field, and Hyde knew what he was talking about when he observed, "the Prince was rough, and passionate, and loved not debate; liked what was proposed, as he liked the persons who proposed it." On October 29, 1660, Pepys writes, "Prince Rupert is come to court; but welcome to nobody," and elsewhere refers to him as "a man of no government." His career after the Restoration was not illustrious, and his overbearing temper had to suffer many humiliations. But it may be allowed that with all his shortcomings, and they were unbecoming enough, Rupert's gallantry was not of a strain that would thrive in the Restoration air. He was not pliant enough to

satisfy the tastes of the new order; for good and ill he belonged by nature rather to the age of Drake than to that of the younger Buckingham and Rochester. There is something to be said for Horace Walpole's plea: "Had the court of the first Charles been peaceful, how agreeably had the prince's congenial propensity flattered and confirmed the inclination of his uncle! How the muse of arts would have repaid the patronage of the monarch, when, for his first artist, she would have presented him with his nephew! How different a figure did the same prince make in a reign of dissimilar complexion! The philosophic warrior, who could relax himself into the ornament of a refined court, was thought a savage mechanic, when courtiers were only voluptuous wits." The contrast is overdrawn, but it is not without truth. And Rupert does indeed deserve some such tribute for one achievement at least. On February 21, 1661, Evelyn writes in his diary, "Prince Rupert first showed me how to grave in *mezzo-tinto*," and on March 13, "'This afternoon Prince Rupert showed me, with his own hands, the new way of graving, called *Mezzo-tinto* . . . this set so many artists at work, that they soon arrived to the perfection it is since come to, emulating the tenderest miniatures." It was unlike Charles to miss the opportunity of patronising the art that his cousin was introducing with so much talent into England; if, that is, he did altogether miss it.[1]

[1] *The Morning Post* for July 12, 1926, contains the following notice: "The Trustees of the British Museum, at their meeting on Saturday,

VII

And now we have to take some measure of the man for whom so much had been suffered, and of whom so much was hoped. Seldom has a man experienced so spectacular a change of fortune as did Charles at the age of thirty. It was not merely an elevation from poverty to wealth; an exile who for many years had been of less account than any groom at Whitehall found himself the undisputed King of a country high in European prestige and with imposing national resources. The effects of this metamorphosis on Charles's character were profound, as we shall see, but we have here to consider him as he was at the date of his restoration.

First, as to his appearance. From the description published after the battle of Worcester, we knew that he was very dark, and over six feet high. Marvell speaks of him as of a "tall stature and of sable hue." As an infant his mother said he was so ugly that she was ashamed of him; by the time he reached manhood he was swarthy, with large bright eyes, a poor mouth, a figure "tolerable" by one account, and "extremely fine" by another, and a finely shaped head. Charles was in the habit of referring to himself as an ugly fellow, but this is usual only with people who can very well afford to do so. By far the most con-

acquired the unique mezzotint by Prince Rupert, the head of a woman in an oval, donations in aid of the acquisition having been made by the Home family and Messrs. Thomas Agnew & Sons. With the exception of Nos. 8 and 11, the Museum collection of Prince Rupert's twelve engravings, as described by Chaloner Smith, is now complete.

vincing evidence in the matter is the lovely portrait of Hinchingbrooke, which is reproduced as a frontispiece to the present volume. In Mr. F. R. Harris's admirable book on the first Lord Sandwich, this picture is wrongly attributed to Lely. It was in fact painted before Charles's return to England, the artist being unknown. It is the portrait to which Pepys refers in his diary on November 15, 1660: "My Lord [Sandwich] did this day show me the King's picture, which was done in Flanders, that the King did promise my Lord before he ever saw him, and that we did expect to have at sea before the King came to us; but it came but to-day, and indeed it is the most pleasant and the most like him that ever I saw picture in my life." The work is convincing in every feature, and that this is a faithful representation of Charles as he was at the age of thirty there can be little doubt.

Nearly every contemporary and posthumous estimate of Charles's character is strongly coloured by moral censure of his amours. Finding him notoriously deficient in the virtue of personal chastity, one critic after another has been sternly fixed on allowing him no virtues at all. The amiability, the friendliness, the sense of gratitude, the desire to foster talent and learning, the moral courage, and the candour that were apparently his, are, with no logic at all, stamped in a fervour of reproach as nothing but dissembling. Burnet, writing of him as he was at the Restoration, says

that he "had an easy affability and softness of temper that charmed all who came near him, until they were made sensible how little his good looks, and kind words, and fair promises, wherein he was liberal to excess, were to be depended on." What the bishop means is that a man whose mistresses were a reproach to piety, obviously must be unreliable in all his undertakings; for Burnet advances no proof in support of his sweeping charge of perfidy. Charles in later life, under state pressure, was to behave in a way that needs some ingenuity of defence, particularly in his treatment of Clarendon, but even so his trespasses in this kind were rare and there is no evidence that they were ever wanton. That he was licentious we know, but it is as idle to suppose that licence must be accompanied by every other defect of character as to believe that all religious men are good. The cynical disregard for the feelings of others, the worthlessness of his promises, and the duplicity of his professions are legends that in the light of what testimony there is can convince no one but the moralist determined to believe no good of a man who offended so frankly in the matter that chiefly engages the moralist's attention. Against no man have charges of general meanness been more freely levelled, and against no man with less plausibility. Clarendon apart, there is no recorded instance of his having abandoned a servant to whom he owed fidelity; he was, indeed, too ready to cling to those who clearly merited no consideration. So far as

is known, every promise made during his exile was faithfully carried out as soon as opportunity came. His mistresses might complain of rivals, but they never had to do so of desertion. Appeals to his patronage made by industry or learning never failed to meet with an intelligent response. The incident of his encounter with Hobbes is characteristic of a natural generosity that nothing but moral pedantry can deny.

That with the coming of ease and luxury after 1660 there was a slackening of the sinews, a growing tendency to avoid difficulties or to settle them by compromise, a general disinclination to be bothered by disputes that seemed not very much to matter, was a natural consequence of the ardours that preceded the Restoration. But at thirty Charles had had little opportunity of relaxing. Formless as his policy had been, there was not a month in the years of waiting in which he had not had to prepare himself at some call of possible advantage. He had been in frequent movement at the bidding of this interest and that, and had been compelled to keep his wits and body alike in constant training. His physical condition was remarkable, and whatever his excesses may have been, they had left it unimpaired. Three months after his return to England Pepys wrote that he tired all the people about him with his early rising. He had, in short, come through a long and often terrible probation with surprising credit. The endurance and fortitude of his Scotch campaign

have been shown, as also the goodwill between himself and Hyde that had survived all trials. The moderation with which he took up his newly acquired powers was not merely dictated by a sound party policy; it would have been impossible without definite graces of disposition in Charles himself. The kind of man presented to us by the moralists would certainly, having suffered so much, have marked his return to the throne by a vindictiveness that might or might not have been controlled by his counsellors. But the counsellors had no such problem to face. Charles had seen his father defeated, disgraced, and, as he must inevitably have considered it, murdered; he had been thrown out of his inheritance with a price on his head; he had been the tool or plaything of half the rascals in European diplomacy; he had suffered a succession of petty indignities that must often have seemed intolerable to any man with Stuart blood in him; he had been scolded by bigots whom he recognised at sight for the crazy folk that they were, and in daily danger of betrayal by knaves and blockheads; he had had to beg money for a new pair of shoes, and he had learnt to dodge spies—generally without knowing whose spies they might be—at every street corner. And he emerged from the ordeal resilient and robust, and, what is yet more a matter for wonder, unembittered. Nor had his pleasures prevented him from cultivating natural aptitudes of which even Burnet allows him to have been possessed. "His

apprehension was quick, and his imagination and memory good. . . . His compass of knowledge was very considerable, for he understood physic and chemistry, mechanics and navigation well, and the architecture of a ship a little more easily than what became a prince." Which reservation is a pleasing illumination of the bishop's mind.

The young man of thirty who presided over the festivities at The Hague was, then, a striking figure, a little heavily-grained in his looks, but handsome nevertheless. He had sown a liberal bushel of wild oats, and showed no sign of discontinuing that pursuit; but he was widely experienced in men and affairs, he was under no illusions about the charity of this world, and his mind had been sharpened and his constitution braced by adversity. He had proved his pluck, and he bore no grudges when many grudges might have been excused. In mixing with all sorts of people he had learnt, in spite of many discouragements, to like rather than despise his fellows. Altogether a man that we would far rather have known than any other of the remarkably good or remarkably bad personages that surrounded him.

VIII

On May 23, 1660, Charles set out on his return to England. The following account of the journey, taken from Edward Montagu's journal, has not been published before, and has the interest of being from the pen of the man who was responsible for

the safe conduct of the King from Scheveningen to Dover.

May 1660.

23rd. Monday in the Morninge the Gen[ll] [1] went in his Barge close to the shore side at Scheveningen where was preparde a Dutch Vessell to carry his Ma[tie] on board the Nazebie and about ten of the Clocke in the Morninge, the King's most sacred Ma[tie] came to the shore side and boarded the s[d] Vessell, but before shee was launched from the shore his Ma[tie] went off her into the Rear Admirall's Bote and came presently on board the Gen[l's] Barge, as did also the Dukes of Yorke and Glocester, the Princesse Royall, the Queene of Bohemiah, and the Prince of Orange, and so were rowed for the Nazebie which shipp they boarded about Eleaven of the Clock in the morninge.

There were upon the shore at Scheveningen many troupes of horses and foote of the States, and about fortie Pairs of Ordinance, all which saluted the Kinge, and a vast multitude of People were spectators, supposed to be one hundred thousand, at the least.

The shipps saluted the King with all those Gunnes twice over before he came on Board and once over after [he] had come on Board, and once more at the gooing off of the Princesse Royall, the Queene of Bohemiah, and Prince of Orange, which was about three of the Clocke in the afternoon, immediately after which the fleete set sail bound for Dover.

23. This day his Ma[tie] was pleased to change the name of the Nazebie into the Charles and newe named divers other Shippes, the Richard was named the Royall James. His Royall Highness the Duke of York Embarqued for London when we set saile, as did the Duke of Glocester into the Swiftsure. Mouns[r] Opdam the Holland's Admirall came aboard the Nazebie in the Dutch vessell prepared for the King but stayd not to go off with the Prince of Orange and went away before Diner in another Boat by himselfe. 25th Friday about ten of the Clocke in the morning the fleete came to an anchor in Dover Roade.

About one of the Clocke in the afternoon the Kinge and the Dukes of York and Glocester went off on board into the

[1] Montagu himself, who was General-at-Sea.

Gen^{lls} Barge, Capt Cuttance Steeringe the Barge and the Gen^{ll} standinge before the house of the Barge Boald Briggantine road into the shore ahead of the Barge the Vice Admirall upon the Starboard quarter and Rare Adm^{ll} upon the Larboard divers other Boates in the fleete in Company, and betweene three and four of the Clocke in the afternoon the King's most sacred Ma^{tie} and their Royall Highnesses the Dukes of Yorke and Glocester went on shore upon the Strand a little to the n'ward of Dover Road where immediately Gen^{ll} Monke met him, and when Gen^{ll} Montagu had attended his Ma^{tie} and the Dukes unto Gen^{ll} Monke and had the honor to kisse their Charles hands he presently went back on board the ~~Nazebie~~ and sailed that night into the Downs; the Charles fired 3 rounds and the rest of the fleete 5 rounds in salutes.

27. Sunday about one of the Clock in the morninge Sir Edward Walker came aboard the Charles and brought [the] Gen^{ll} from his Ma^{tie} from Canterbury the most hon^{ble} order of the Garter with which he invested him in his heralds Coat about eight of the Clocke in the morninge in the Presence of M^{r} Tho: Crewe the Vice and Rare Admirall and all the second third and fourth Rate Commanders in the Downes.[1]

Samuel Pepys, twenty-seven years of age, was a kinsman of Montagu, who had made him his secretary for this expedition. The famous passages in his diary dealing with the King's return are, I think, engagingly supplemented by Montagu's own account now given. Montagu, it will be noticed, enters the date 23rd twice, and both entries refer to that day, while he makes no note of the 24th. Also Montagu gives the 23rd as Monday, while it was in fact Wednesday. On the 24th Pepys on rising made himself "as fine as I could, with the linning stockings on and wide canons that I bought the other day at The Hague," canons

[1] Monk was given the Garter at Canterbury on the 26th.

being boot hose-tops affected by fashion, and there was an "extraordinary press of noble company, and great mirth all the day." In the evening Pepys, after a day of "merry stories," had the honour of taking to the King the only order that received the royal signature on board, and having but three months before been a clerk at fifty pounds a year, felt that his fortune was made, a conviction that was flattered the next day when the Duke of York called him Pepys by name. He accompanied Charles and Montagu in the barge on landing, sitting by the King's footman who was in charge of one of the famous spaniels, the "linning stockings" it seems being in some jeopardy in consequence. These romantic creatures, so dear to pictorial history, were, we learn, less popular at court than might be supposed. Some harassed groom of the chamber may well have felt satisfaction, if ever he read Evelyn, to find it written for posterity that his master "took delight in having a number of little spaniels follow him and lie in his bed-chamber, where he often suffered the bitches to puppy and give suck, which rendered it very offensive, and indeed made the whole court nasty and stinking." But Charles in this allowed no interference with his fancy, and when, as not infrequently happened, one of his dogs was stolen there was a general commotion. Wheatley in his edition of Pepys gives the following advertisement, said to have been worded by Charles himself:

We must call upon you again for a Black Dog between

a greyhound and a spaniel, no white about him, onely a streak on his breast, and his tayl a little bobbed. It is His Majestie's own Dog, and doubtless was stolen, for the dog was not born nor bred in England, and would never forsake his Master. Whosoever finds him may acquaint any at Whitehal for the Dog was better known at Court, than those who stole him. Will they never leave robbing his Majestie! Must he not keep a Dog? This dog's place (though better than some imagine) is the only place which nobody offers to beg.

IX

The progress from Dover, where the Mayor in a few suitable words presented the King with a Bible, which Charles declared he loved above all things in the world, was an uninterrupted triumph. The journey to London, through Canterbury and Rochester, took four days, and on May 29, Charles's birthday, Evelyn stood in the Strand and watched the King go by, attended by vast crowds that had been gathering for many miles out of the city, "the ways strewed with flowers, the bells ringing, the streets hung with tapestry, fountains running with wine," over twenty thousand soldiers brandishing their swords and shouting in a delirium of joy, the Mayor, Aldermen, and city companies in full livery, the windows crowded with rank and fashion, and the mob pressing in such pandemonium that it was in continual progress along the streets of London from two in the afternoon until nine at night.

CHAPTER VIII

THE KING: PART I

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The King. Part I

I

CHARLES'S reign was to last twenty-five years. From the crowded and highly involved political history of that period it will be our purpose to select only such events as, placed beside more domestic circumstances, shall help to elucidate the character which is the subject of this study.

For some weeks Whitehall was the scene of confused felicitations, and the inevitable scramble for favours. People poured in from all parts of the country, some to seek places, others in disinterested loyalty. "The eagerness of men, women and children to see his Majesty, and kiss his hands," says Evelyn, "was so great, that he had scarce leisure to eat for some days . . . the King being as willing to give them satisfaction, would have none kept out, but gave free access to all sorts of people." Charles also was much engaged in touching for the evil, and Pepys tells us that the country gentlewomen, less observant of etiquette than their town sisters, were not content with a kissing of hands. In the meantime Hyde settled down to the business

of disentangling the affairs of state, formulating claims, suggesting middle courses, composing differences. It was a task of the utmost delicacy and endless difficulties, but slowly he began to organise an instrument that, if it was far from satisfying everybody, at least made some sort of government administration possible. One of the first questions to be decided was the punishment of the regicides.

The story is a sickening one. The Bill of Indemnity and Oblivion, which was placed before Parliament immediately on the Restoration, provided for the exclusion of such persons as the houses should consider unfit for pardon. This clause was aimed directly at the men who had been the actual agents of the late King's execution. No one was specified, but the intention was clear. Parliament itself was to name the exceptions, and in the general atmosphere of royalist enthusiasm it was in no mood to be lenient. After much debating the Bill was passed, and forty-nine men in all were placed outside its operation. Of these, ten were put to death with every attendant atrocity: Daniel Axtel, John Carew, Gregory Clement, Francis Hacker, Thomas Harrison,[1] and the priest Hugh Peters, over sixty years of age, were hanged at Charing Cross on October 14, 1660, and Thomas Scot, Adrian Scroop, John Cook, and John Jones three days later. To read the sentences inflicted

[1] Evelyn includes Hewson in his list, but he seems in fact to have escaped to the Continent. Evelyn probably mistook the name for Harrison.

on these men is to be filled with horror at the brutality that devised them, a brutality that, not sated with savage mutilation of the living, committed ghoulish indignities on the dead. Cromwell, Ireton, and John Bradshaw were dug out of their graves, hanged in their shrouds at Tyburn, dismembered, their bodies buried under the gallows, and their heads set up in Westminster Hall. Even Pepys was moved to protest against this dishonour done to "a man of so great courage" as Cromwell.

For the ferocity of these proceedings there can be no palliation. It was a degradation of any possible human code. But certain aspects of the occasion itself have to be considered more fully. In the first place, the practice of torture and the foul method of executing penalties that are revolting in their terror to our minds, were in common usage until hardly more than a hundred years ago. Mr. St. John Ervine in his Life of Parnell tells of an Irish rebel who in 1798 was sentenced by an English officer to death by flogging on the belly. Nor need we make even so small a passage of time to encounter strange conceptions of humanity. If our modern civilisation has discarded the rack and the thumb-screw, it has achieved its own refinement of cruelty in the third degree, and if we no longer disembowel the victims of our justice, we subject them to processes of suffering that are none the less indecent because they are out of sight. Some recent incidents in our own penal records are

probably still very painfully in the memory of people little likely to condone crime. Our ancestors, if reproached by us for their barbarity, might even retort that after all we are but a little more cold-blooded in our severities, or more squeamish about witnessing the consequences of our judgments. The lust for punishment may be an excusable, even a necessary one, but it is idle to pretend that we have outgrown it. And it is a lust that, as we know, flourishes especially in times of national excitement. Thousands of good Englishmen would have derived immense satisfaction from the spectacle if the Kaiser's head could have been set up in Westminster Hall. And in 1660 national excitement ran very high. Nowhere is the temper of the time more significantly expressed than in an ejaculation to be found in the diary of gentle John Evelyn. He was not, he tells us, present at the Charing Cross executions, but on the 17th he "met their [the regicides'] quarters, mangled, cut, reeking, as they were brought from the gallows in baskets on the hurdle." And on recording this dreadful sight he exclaims, "Oh, the miraculous providence of God."

One thing further. In the light of history it may seem that the regicides were impelled to their terrible decision by an evil in the State that they profoundly believed could be exterminated in no other way. We have already considered the abuses of which Charles I was the source and agent, abuses that threatened the fundamentals of social

and constitutional life in England, and many of us may decline to allow that Cromwell and his auxiliaries were actuated by anything by a national necessity that pressed upon them to desperation. That the King's execution was merely the wanton murder of an enemy who had fallen in their power is a view that will not survive a moment's candid examination. But it was a view necessarily held by the royalist party at the time, and it was a view greatly inflamed by the doctrine of the sacred immunity of kings. When power was restored to the royal party no readiness on the part of Charles and his ministers to forget the past could have prevented a clamour for retribution. Some heavy forfeit had to be paid, and of those who paid it Mr. G. M. Trevelyan has said the perfectly apposite word: they "served a national purpose as scape-goats for other rebels. Their blood sealed up the past. The best opportunity that informers and terrorists ever had in our island was fortunately disallowed." [1] As it was, the measures taken were not severe enough to satisfy the extremists. Burnet speaks of the unaccountable clemency extended to some who deserved no more consideration than those who suffered, and expresses astonishment that three men in particular should have escaped justice; one of them was John Milton. Hyde showed no eagerness to enforce penalties, and we know that Charles himself had no liking for the business. Pepys was told by Sir George

[1] *England under the Stuarts.* Revised, 1925, p. 334.

Carteret, Treasurer of the Navy, when talking of the regicides, that the King was "a man of so great compassion" that, if the law would give leave, "he would wholly acquit them."

II

But if Charles and Hyde were at one in nursing no animosity against the leaders of a revolution that having done its work was now acclimatising its forces to the renovated monarchy, they were soon to be at one in very little else. The influence that the association of Charles and Hyde in the years following the Restoration has had upon history can hardly be overstressed. Not, it should be added so much upon the actual shaping of policy at the time, as upon the view that history has taken of Charles's character. During the exile the two men, in spite of their most dissimilar natures, had accommodated themselves to each other, as men of any sense at all are likely to do in times of adversity. If Charles was often bored by Hyde's lectures, and Hyde as often distracted by Charles's waywardness, they both understood that to allow such differences to cause anything like a breach between them would be a fatal imbecility. And in this habit of mutual forbearance a measure of real affection had been established. Charles knew that without his minister's counsel and experience of affairs his own impetuosity would lead nowhere, and Hyde learnt to realise that Charles had natural parts of wit and courage that caprice

could not wholly obscure even to his austere perceptions. Hyde might complain of inattention and sometimes be hurt by looseness in personal conduct, but he found his absolute devotion to the principle of monarchy not too severely taxed by a prince who might be unsettled in unsettled times, but whom he had every hope of reforming in more favourable conditions. It was, after all, little more than a question of tolerance between two temperaments in the years of exile. If Hyde was inclined to political preaching there was in practice very little to preach about. General principles were for the most part all that he had to submit to sometimes impatient ears. The purpose of his homilies was to instruct Charles, not to persuade him to make decisions; since there was very little about which decision could be made. And when Charles, as congregation, was dismissed, he also could dismiss the sermon from his mind.

With the Restoration, however, all this was changed. Hyde, as a matter of course, became the effective head of the Government. It was suggested to him that he should become Prime Minister, but he had constitutional scruples about the propriety of such an office, and preferred to remain Lord Chancellor. And within a few months it was evident that altered circumstances were going to make desperately heavy demands upon the esteem that had survived the dangers of the preceding years, or, perhaps, had been engendered by them. Hyde, or Clarendon as we may now call

him, during his coming years of office displayed many high gifts of statesmanship. Somewhat imperfect in his human sympathies, he nevertheless strove to inform all his measures with just impartiality, and it is notably to his honour that in a corrupt age he was incorruptible. With the success or failure of his political schemes this narrative is not concerned; our interest is to discover the psychological currents that passed between the minister and his sovereign in the period following 1660. For it must be remembered that the view taken of Charles by history has been conditioned largely, in many instances it may be said wholly, by the impact that he made upon the mind of Clarendon. But to allow Clarendon's judgment to govern our own is to miss the truth about Charles as surely as Clarendon missed it himself. His *History* and *Life* are great works, and, it need not be said, invaluable as records of the age of which he writes. But the conditioning motive of these splendid and moving chronicles is the opposition of two principals of whom the writer himself happened to be one, and any deductions from the presentation given have to be drawn with great caution in consequence. That Clarendon attempted any perversion of the truth is not for a moment suspected, but if it appears that his own share in the action was in part directed by a misconception, it is clear that his interpretation of that action will by so much be unsound. And that Clarendon's contact with Charles more and more

became subject to misconception there is, I believe, little doubt.

Charles and Clarendon were no longer fugitives engaged in fending off immediate catastrophes from day to day. They had suddenly become, with every assurance of security, the constitutional and executive heads respectively of a great and powerful state. Clarendon's task was to devise a policy that should aim at drawing all the conflicting parties of the nation into some accord under the authority of the throne, and to settle the swarm of contentious problems that beset the Government with as much tact and wisdom as possible. And his genius was peculiarly suited to these purposes. He was learned, persuasive, astute, and anxious to be fair. Under his guidance the parties to a dispute soon learnt that they could look for scrupulous dealing. If he did not understand all the aspects of a question he was ready to seek the advice of those who thought they did, though less ready to follow it. His own interests had no weight with him whatever, and there is no instance of his having used his signal ability to advance himself in place or fortune. Such rewards as he received from the state, though considerable, were rather below than above his deserts. His mind was hardly ever at a loss in situations that might have been the despair of even the finest intelligence, and the purity of his administration was an example to Europe. So far—and it is far indeed—Clarendon met his immense responsibilities with a fertility of resource

and an integrity that command nothing but admiration. But his ideal obligations did not cease here. If he was to make the new Constitution truly effective he had not only to support his office as chief minister with honour and acumen, he had also to understand precisely how the man whom destiny had brought to the throne could most effectively be adjusted to the conditions under which he was so earnestly striving to reform the monarchical system. And it was at this point that Clarendon decisively failed. A defter mind would have seen that the thing to do was to use Charles as he was, and it would have found that this could be done with considerable success. But Clarendon made no attempt to do this; instead, he sought with unwearying assiduity to transform Charles into something that he could never be, and the results were lamentable.

III

The Government was strained by a steady and bewildering pressure of business. A standing army of sixty thousand men had to be disbanded, without affronting the pride or exciting the temper of the great Ironside veterans who still looked on the restored Stuart with uneasy suspicion. The interminable rancours of Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Papists had to be soothed into some sort of working pretence that would let the citizens of England live in peace. A settlement had to be made in Scotland, where passion, intrigue, and duplicity still made settlement wellnigh impos-

sible, and a similar task had to be faced independently in Ireland. There was the almost hopeless problem of putting the national finances in order, with the added difficulty of deciding how and to what extent provision was to be made for the Crown. For solutions to all these enigmas Hyde was chiefly responsible, and he faced his gigantic labours with inflexible resolution. He handled the army with discretion, and in ecclesiastical disputes he was on his own ground. In the manipulation of supplies he was less successful, but no man at a stroke could hope to do more than modify a crisis that persisted at the centre of the parliamentary struggle for the best part of a century. Of Scotch and Irish affairs he was admittedly both ignorant and impatient, and probably came to the cynical but not very unreasonable conclusion that all things considered they were as well settled one way as another. On the whole he came through an ordeal of unusual severity with very great credit, and there was no man in England at the time who could have accomplished anything like as much as he did towards stabilising a violently distracted country. But in doing it he brought himself, which is to say that he brought the Government, into continual friction with the King, and it was this that he should above all things have avoided. He did it with the best intentions; he had formed his ideal of what the King should be, and with a rapidly growing inelasticity of mind he set himself to the realisation

of his ideal. And he daily forgot the lessons of exile. For the quick, amiable, brave, and very human personality that he should have remembered so well from the days of their endurance together, he attempted to substitute a figure of punctual rigidity who should devote himself to politic investigation and arrive at authoritative decisions. In this he handled Charles with an unaccountable lack of insight, and went far both to wrecking his own work and imposing an illusion upon history.

IV

It was difficult for Charles, and it was difficult for Clarendon, to see it, but the whole significance of the Restoration was, as has already been said, that it inaugurated constitutional monarchy in England. Charles's ready instinct cannot have been wholly unaware of the fact, nor can Clarendon, with his philosophic knowledge of history and of his own times, have failed to perceive it. The doctrine of constitutional monarchy is a subtle one, and rarely understood. The virtue of a king in our state is that he symbolises the corporate power in one figure, and is a focus at which individual contentions disappear. The English mind will not tolerate the idea of any single man being set in undisputed control of the nation by virtue of his own merits; no man's merits, it is conceived, could for a moment sustain such a presumption. Once, in a supreme crisis, a Cromwell was elected to such authority, but it was

precisely this ingrained conviction that no man, however great, is equal to the demands of dictatorship, that made a succession of Cromwells impossible. We cannot finally realise the true meaning of monarchy, and the sublime political conception that it embodies, until we see the point of Melbourne's acceptance of the Garter because it implied "no damned nonsense about merit." It may be true that nowhere are personal graces more attractive than in a king, but it is also true that the profoundest homage to the mystery of kingship lies in the idea that personal graces do not constitute its secret. Nor is executive ability asked of the monarch. The excursions made by a wise king into affairs may sometimes be impressive, but they are not inherent in his function. Generally speaking, to make them is to exceed his commission, and the wise king's place is outside the sphere of argument. His influence upon the culture and social life of the country may be properly exercised and far-reaching, but it must be by patronage and example and not by way of political activity. It is reserved for him to give the royal assent, which no one else, it is assumed, could be competent to give, but there his administrative obligations begin and end. It need hardly be added that this view of kingship, far from diminishing the dignity of the king's person, implies an uncompromising regard on the part of his subjects, a regard that the constitutional monarchs of England have always enjoyed, and continue to enjoy to this day.

For this high office Charles was peculiarly fitted. He had the personal graces, and an inclination to encourage those enterprises that are most worthily encouraged by a king. He had a turn for fine manners, and enjoyed the company of distinguished men. If his amours were notorious, they were so in an age that was content to accept them with no more than an occasional shrug. And he was, by nature, exactly equipped for an attitude towards affairs becoming in a king; he could take an intelligent and even an instructive interest in them without in the least wishing to interfere in their conduct. It was well within Clarendon's diplomacy to present his recommendations in such a way as would have met with ready approval from the King, and receive all that was necessary by way of royal sanction. But he adopted no such course. If, again, Charles had been a greater man than he was, he might in those early days of the new order have enlightened Clarendon as to the proper relationship of the king to the state, and have convinced his obstinate minister that here was a king by whom that relationship could be very successfully maintained. But he had no inclination for attempting to persuade Clarendon, since Clarendon was far too busy in attempting to persuade him.

And there lay the whole difficulty. In the days on the Continent he had endured Clarendon's instruction with good-humoured patience, knowing that he could forget it half an hour later. But now the instruction was incessantly followed by re-

quests that he would make some practical decision, and this was unbearably irksome to him. That constitutionally his objection was a perfectly proper one probably did not occur either to Clarendon or himself, unless as a vague instinct. Clarendon became for him an irrepressible nuisance, and he became for Clarendon an unprincipled shirker. Whatever Charles's religious feelings may have been, they had nothing to do with doctrinal quarrels, and to be bullied into deciding which of a dozen strident and equally academic factions was to have its way was insufferable. As for Scotland, the very name cast him into a gloom of dismal recollections, and when baited into deciding what was the proper government for Ireland he could only say that Ormond was a very charming Irishman and that the best way was to leave it to him. He knew well enough that all these things had to be settled in some way, and he was perfectly willing that Clarendon should settle them, having entire confidence in his minister's capacity and supposing that it was his minister's job. But the deuce of it was that Clarendon would settle nothing without forcing him to give these decisive opinions on matters about which he was indifferent. And, if the truth must be told, we like him the better for his indifference. In half the disputes that were Clarendon's daily occupation it really did not matter in the least what the decision was; the only important thing was that, for administrative purposes, a decision of some sort

should be made. In these purely political pursuits Clarendon was an adept, and he liked them. The world must have its Clarendons, or it would fall into chaos, or at least so the Clarendons assert, sometimes, it must be allowed, strangely against the available evidence. But to Charles such pursuits were an incomparable tedium. He had far too fine a gift of humour not to see through them. He also had far too much good sense not to treat them with a respect proper to his office, and if Clarendon could have but realised what was happening he would have found Charles one of the most effective as he was actually the first of our constitutional monarchs. As it was, by his constant anxiety to load the King with responsibilities that he ought never to have been asked to bear, he undermined his own authority and gradually drove Charles into habits of despotism for which he had no natural disposition, and which were a contradiction of the principles that Clarendon fondly believed himself to be vindicating.

The bitterness that was the inevitable outcome of this fatal misconception soon began to make its mark. Clarendon's references to Charles take on a new tone of unguarded disapproval. In one passage after another as he writes he impugns Charles's good faith, his veracity, his honour, and he comes in time to consider him as the willing victim of a depraved and licentious court. He studiously preserves a dispassionate air, but as he proceeds it is clear that his temper is ruffled.

And still he went on delivering his assault, lecturing, exemplifying, insisting on those exasperating decisions. By degrees Charles's patience was worn out. What the deplorable issue was we shall see. In the meantime he turned with growing relief from the incorrigible Chancellor to his laboratories, his gardens, his tool chest and his quadrants, to his mistresses, and less fortunately to the society of worthless courtiers who at least did not pester him with dissertations.

There was real tragedy in all this. Charles did suffer some deterioration of character after the Restoration, though we are far from accepting the common view of him at this or at any time of his life. But it is a mistake to suppose that the deterioration, such as it was, had its origins in habits of cynicism and debauchery formed in his years of exile. Whatever these may have been there is, as we have shown, nothing to indicate that they had impaired his very considerable gifts and virtues at the time of the Restoration. When he came to the throne his powers had reached an early maturity, and his qualities were in a vigorous prime. Under fortunate direction they might have made his reign one of prosperous distinction, and his early experience of life, so much more varied than is the common lot of princes, far from being a disability would have been of valuable service to the state. And the opportunity was largely wasted because Clarendon's unyielding rectitude could not adjust itself to a temperament with which, in spite

of personal ties, and a strict loyalty, his own was completely at variance. Charles, under this insidious and wholly unintentional discouragement, showed less and less inclination for business that was invested with a routine so distasteful to him, and drifted into a settled neglect of affairs from which he rarely roused himself. Even so, he was probably as satisfactory an instrument as Clarendon's methods would have achieved in any case, for had he applied himself to state designs in the way that his minister desired, the result would, in all likelihood, have been a relapse towards the conditions that had provoked the Civil War. Clarendon was able to see the errors of policy that had destroyed Charles I, but to the end of his life he retained an unbounded admiration for the character of his first master, and although he realised the errors he was never convinced that there was anything radically vicious in the policy itself. Almost insensibly, he nursed a regret that Charles II was not like his father, and perhaps never realised that while a man like the son on the throne after the Protectorate meant difficulties, a man like the father in the same place would have meant utter calamity.

V

Nevertheless, Charles did not entirely lose touch with his Government. His intercourse with Clarendon, although the Chancellor maintained it with determination, became more and more formal until the final rupture. But in certain matters the King

continued to exercise his authority, and there was to come a time when he assumed control to an extent that astonished his advisers, and with an ability hardly less marked in that it was often gravely imprudent. His interest in the navy, for example, was always active and independent. The record of naval finances during the time of the Dutch wars is a confusing one, and often wretched enough in its recital of trickery and peculations, but the traditions of a great service were upheld and indeed, in spite of reverses, advanced at sea, and Charles had a personal care of these. One example will suffice at this place. Among the Sandwich papers is a letter from the King to the first Earl, written in his own hand and clearly enough at his own initiative. It was dispatched after Sandwich had conducted a series of successful skirmishes in the North Sea in the prolonged operations that followed the battle of Lowestoft, and has not hitherto been printed.

St. Giles, *Sept.* 16, 1665.

I could not give you my thanks for the first good newes of the 5th because I knew not whither to send them to you; now my L^d^ Rochester hath brought me also yours of the 12th with a second successe upon the Dutch for which I thanke God first and you next, there was nothing desirable beyond this but the beating the enemy in a body, which it seemes they could not present themselves to, haveing been dispersed by the fowle wether: You did very well not to attempt Banker [Banckers—Dutch admiral] by tacking so neere there coast the fowl wether comming upon you, you might have endangered the fleete: Though your letter doth not say it, my L^d^ of Rochester doth, that the whole fleete was comming to the buy [buoy] of the Nore, where I thinke they will be better than anywhere else,

where you must with all possible care and strictnesse keepe your men and officers on board till we heare with certainty what the enemy will do, whether lay up there ships or come out againe, if but to make a Bravado and do some mischife upon the coast, as they have some new great ships ready for it, at the same time you must take care that the ship be repaired and fitted with all thinges necessary upon this project: And if upon receipt of this any thing occurs to you worth my knowledge dispatch it away to Oxford where I have appointed my brother to meete me on the 25th of this month, it being not possible to do it sooner dispersed as we are, and then we will take a final resolution of all kindes relating to the fleete, and dispatch them immediately to you, in the meane time be assured that I am constantly Yours

C. R.

[Cover]. For the Earle of Sandwich.

VI

The question of immediate importance that most nearly concerned Charles himself after he had settled into possession of Whitehall was his marriage. On April 23, 1661, he was crowned in Westminster Abbey, in a scene of magnificence upon which both Pepys and Evelyn lavished their descriptive powers. The year that had passed since the King's return had seen the first enthusiasm of the country already moderated by misgivings and some disillusion, but on this occasion it broke out again with renewed abandon. All the splendour of the nation gathered in a tumult of ceremony; the throng in the Abbey was so great that most of the people could see nothing of the actual coronation, silver medals were flung broadcast, a din of acclamation filled the precincts for hours, and again the fountains ran with wine. The next morning Pepys

woke with his "head in a sad taking," and had to be given chocolate with his morning draught to settle his stomach. But one thing was lacking on this great day at Westminster. The King looked his part to the admiration of all beholders; but there was no consort beside him.

The nation wanted a queen, and Clarendon had special reasons for desiring to bring about a fulfillment of its hopes. When the marriage of his daughter to the Duke of York had been disclosed to him he had flown into a violent rage. His first impression when the information was given to him was that she was about to have a child by James, and that his family was disgraced in consequence. But when he learnt that not only was this so, but that the marriage was an accomplished fact, he realised that his own flesh and blood was guilty of treason to the Crown, and made no efforts to control his passion. He would, he said, rather his daughter were the Duke's whore than his wife. He called upon the King to have the woman conveyed to the Tower pending the passing of a Bill that should provide for her immediate execution. Persuasion could not allay his extravagance, and Charles's sense of humour had to save the situation. But though Clarendon might be chaffed back into reason, and in time came to view the match with some complacency, he had genuine cause for uneasiness. A royal mesalliance with a member of his own family was a stigma to which he could never wholly be reconciled, but natural

affection and common-sense asserted themselves, and he had to recognise that feudal ideas of treason belonged to a past age. But Clarendon had many industrious enemies, and he saw that the possible lapsing of the succession to his own blood would be a circumstance that his already anxious position could not hope to survive. A sincere interest for the state, therefore, was coupled with his own concern to make Charles's marriage an event of pressing importance to his mind.

Charles was willing to oblige, but without enthusiasm. Once more his severe contact with reality manifested itself. He steadily declined to profess an emotional interest in matters that were plainly governed only by national convenience. If he must marry, let them go on with it, but they must not expect him to become rhetorical about it. This again, from a King who was being asked to provide an heir, was very disturbing to the austere state morality of Clarendon, but to us it appears human enough. The choice of a queen was not easy. There was no eligible French princess, and an alliance with Spain was politically undesirable. Italian claims were considered and dismissed, and most of the other European courts were unable to offer a sufficiently attractive bargain. Finally, the election fell on the Infanta of Portugal, Catherine of Braganza, then a secluded and highly virtuous princess twenty-three years of age. The immediate material advantages of this match were small: a dowry of three million livres in cash and jewels

and the cession of Tangier and Bombay. But it was considered that its influence upon that bugbear of modern history, the balance of European power, would be more than adequate compensation. Spain tried hard to prevent the marriage, and when political argument had failed, her ambassador resorted to the expedient of insinuating that Catherine was incapable of bearing children. At length, however, his and other objections were overruled, and early in 1661 the Earl of Sandwich was sent to Lisbon with a commission to arrange the marriage treaty, collect the dowry, marry the Infanta by proxy, and bring her back to England. Sandwich's own account of this mission has not before been printed; it is full of colour and interest, and I am fortunate in being able to give it here from his manuscript journal. It will be seen that, although the treaty was not actually signed until June, the affair was sufficiently advanced by March for the envoy to speak of Catherine as the Queen of England.

March, 1661.

Friday 14. I presented myselfe to the Queene of England and the King my masters letter.

Wednesday 19 [The Queen] told me that she did very earnestly recommend unto my care the schedule of the Portion delivered me . . . that her Ma^tie^ had overcome almost impossibilities to hasten her voyage, and that I must putt myself to the masteringe some difficulties also, and that I should consider the povertye of the Portugall Nation caused by the oppression of theire enemies.

Her Ma^ty^ also told me that it was probable that the enimies of Portugal would send a fleete to invade the river Tagus as soone as this fleete should be sayled for England, and therefore

wished me to send for S^r John Lawson to come to Lisbon to assist them, and assured me that both the Kinge and the Duke of Yorke would take it well at my hands.

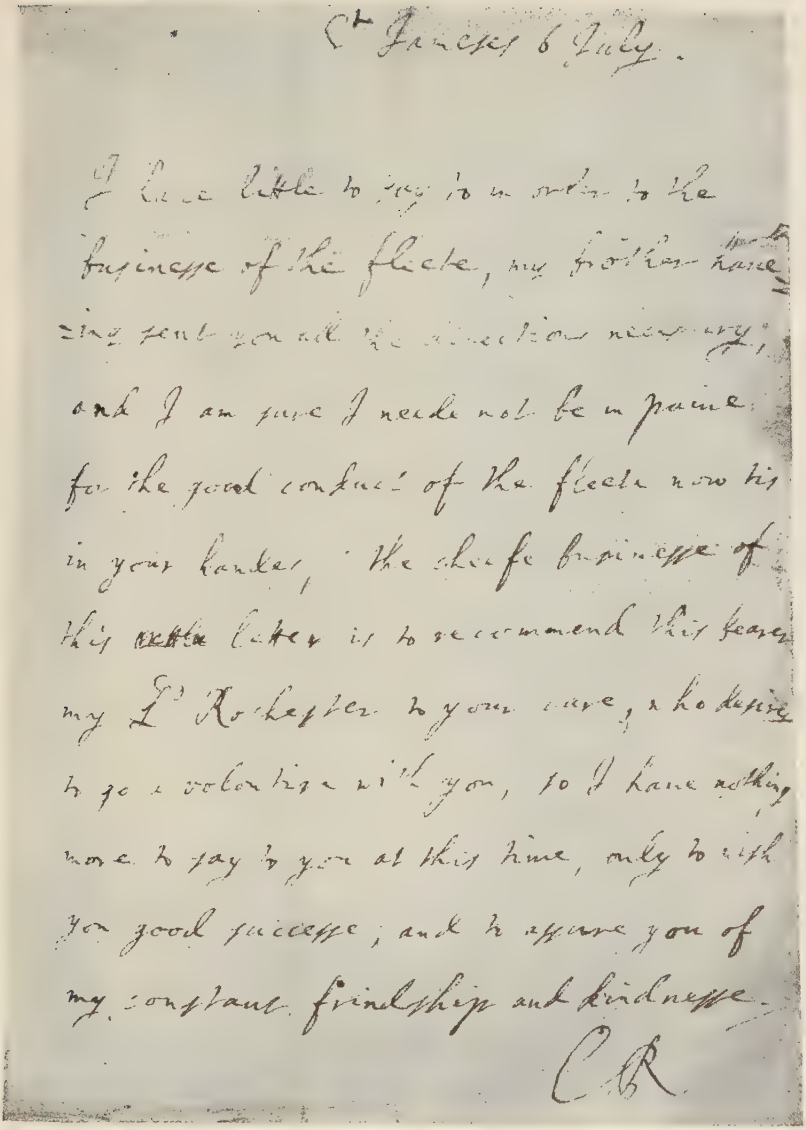
To all I returned her Ma^tie assurance that noe person should be more carefull to master all kind of difficulties in this service than myselfe, and that I would consider what squadron of the fleete could be here soonest, and accordingly waite upon her Ma^tie and give her Ma^tie further satisfaction.

The collection of the marriage portion was attended by a crop of difficulties. Sandwich sent for Lawson as he had been asked to do, but instead of the stipulated sum being paid in money as was expected, Sandwich found an avalanche of commodities being poured in on him. At one time he must have had enough sugar under his seal to sweeten the Bay of Biscay. Worse still, he was offered bills and bonds that were a more questionable security than the goods, and on Friday, March 21, 1661, the journal entry reads:

In the afternoone went to returne the Conde de Ponte his visite and then discoursed with him urging the Treaty and the interest of the Q. and Portugal to be precise in performance of the first million, and to putt merchandise aboard and not bills of exchange. He told mee it was both unreasonable and also impossible for all Portguall to doe it.

It took a year to settle the business. On Saturday, March 22, 1662, Sandwich writes:

After I came home from the Queene, the Conde de Ponte and Sen^r [ ] de Silva came to my house with Jewellery for part of the Portion, w^ch were viewd and estimated by S^r H. Wood, S^r Jo: Mennes, Capt. Minor, the Consul, and a French Jeweller, and their putt into the Kinges iron Truncke, which . . . de Silva carried home with him and S^r Jo: Mennes kept the key, who is also appointed to transport [ ] de Silva and the Jewells.



Facsimile of Letter from Charles
To the Earl of Sandwich

Three weeks later Sandwich had made the best he could of an exacting job, and after what had sometimes threatened to be endless delays, the last livre had been collected, the last pendant valued, and the last sack of sugar stored in the holds. The journal proceeds:

April 1662.

Sunday 13. About 10 a clocke in the morninge I went a shore at the Tereso de Palo and there was mett by Don Lucar Master of the Ceremonyes and in the Kinges Coach conducted to the Pallace, where I met the Kinge, Queene of England and Q. Regent and Don Pedro the Infante. Cominge out of the Presence Chamber, the Earles of Portugal walked with the Kinge coverd and in that respect the Q. of Engl^{d} commanded me to put on my hatt w^{ch} I obeyed. The Kinge etc. went alonge together to the head of the Stairs that descended into the Court and the two Queenes took leave with that Decency and Constancy that was admirable to see. After that the Q. of Engl^{d} went into her Coach, next before w^{ch} went the coach of respect empty and then my coach and then the Nobles of Portugal accordinge to theire dignity. The streets of the Cittye of Lisbon were all adorned with rich Carpetts and Hangings at the windowes and Pageants made in theire manner to demonstrate as much joy as could be; and the regiments of Traine bands and Guards that were in the Cittye drawne out. When the Q^{n} came to the great Cathedrall Church we alighted and went before her into the Church myselfe placed next before Don Pedro, the Kinge leadinge the Q^{n} of Engl^{d} by the hande; when wee came into the Church neere the Doore the Preists brought a Crosse under a rich canopy supported by 6 preists which the K. Q. and D.P^{d} kissed kneelinge upon cushions. When they came into the Quire, the Kinge and Queene took theire seats to have Masse and the Conde de Ponte [and others] went with mee to a roome purposely prepared for mee to repose in untill the Masse was celebrated. After Masse I came downe to the Quire againe and took my place before the Queene and soe we went into the coaches another way of the Cittye to a new bridge built at the end of the Kinges Yard purposely for the Queene to take water att, all hanged richly and floored wth

carpetts, where the Queene descended and embarqued with the Kinge and Don Pedro in the K^gs bardge and soe went together aboard the Royall Charles where as soone as they were entered the Henry (S^r Jo Mennes Vice-Admirall) fired 61 gunns; the James Reare Am^ll 59 . . . and all the rest of the fleete proportionally. After some hours discourse the Kinge went ashore and I by the Q^nes command went alonge with him. The shipps all fired againe, the Vice A^ll 41 the Reare Ad^ll 39 and the rest proportionally.

At night the shipps shewed out lights at every Porthole and in their Topps and Yards and fired rocketts and squibbs very handsome to see in the night tyme.

Monday 14. We weighed ancor about 10 a clocke and fell downe as far as Aleantara, the Kinge and Don Pedro came on board . . . and stayed untill we came to an ancor and then went off.

In the night about 12 a clocke the Kinge came incognito in a bardge with his musique very good voices and lay at the sterne of the Shipp and gave the Queene musique.

Tuesday 15. By 6 a clocke in the morninge we weighed ancor againe the wind at NW, and gott out of the river to sea; as I passed by the Castle the Queene commanded me to [ ] the Standard which was done.

As soone as we were out at sea the Queene and all the Ladyes were sea-sicke.

Her Ma^ty commanded me to give the Kinge a speedy account of her Ma^tys settinge forward, w^ch I did and wrote a pacquett for England presently . . . [on following days are entries only of bearings and so forth].

Thursday 24 . . . S^r Jo: Mennes came aboard, informed mee of men in the Elias that had broken up some sugar chests. I gave him order to call a Councill of Warr and to try the men. . . .

Saturday 26 . . . I waited upon the Queene in the morninge to know her pleasure concerninge makinge the best of the way and sendinge M^r Montagu before for England . . . M^r Montagu to goe speedily. . . . This eveninge M^r Montagu went for England in the Princesse with letters from the Queene. . . .

Monday 28 . . . The Princesse was yet in sight 4 leagues of us, and 2 other shipps 5 or 6 leagues off on the starboard side. . . .

May.

Sunday 4. Wind at ENE at 8 in the morninge wee were 3 leagues off Sillye Islands bearinge NW faire in sight and 7 leagues NE was the Lands End faire to be seene also. . . .

Wednesday 7. This morninge Col. St. Albans came on board and brought the Queene a present of fresh Provisions from St. Michaels Mont. . . .

Thursday 8. . . . We heard from Penzans that the Princesse arrived at Plymouth on Sunday last. . . .

Saturday 10 . . . at ancor . . . had little wind but a grate fogg.

Sunday 11. . . . At noone we had Torbay WNW of us 6 leagues, little wind . . very smooth water as ever I saw this last 3 dayes. At sunn sett his Royal Highnesse [the Duke of York] came on board us from his yaukht and attendinge upon him the Duke of Ormond the Earle of Suffolke the Earle of Chesterfield the Earle of Caslingford M^r^ Coventry M^r^ Bro[w]nker M^r^ May. . . .

Tuesday 13. . . . The Duke kept in his yaught upon the quarter of the Charles and every day came on board to visit the Queene. . .

Wednesday 14. Wind westerly, wee weighed ancor and about 2 a clocke in the afternoone came to an ancor off the Spithead and about 4 a clock in the afternoone, His Royall Highness to the Queene in the Ann yaught and sailed to the beach at Portsmouth next the Towne Gate and then Her Ma^tie^ went into the bardge wherein she was brought ashore the Duke of Ormond and the Earl of Manchester attendinge on the shore side to receive Her Ma^tie^, who immediately upon landinge went in her owne coach, The L^ds^, the Portugall Embassador and myselfe walkinge afoot before the Coach, to the Kinges House in Portsmouth.

Tuesday 20. About noone The Kinge came to Portsmouth. The Queene kept her bedd, for a greate cold.

Wednesday 21. In the afternoone the Kinge and Queene came into the Presence Chamber upon the Throne, and the Contract formerly made with the Portugall Embassador was read in English by S^r^ John Nicolas in Portuguese by the Portugal Secretary deGuise, after w^ch^ the King tooke the Queene by the hand and (as I thinke) said the words of matrimonye appointed in the Common Prayer, The Queene also declaringe her consent. Then the Bishop of London stood forth and made the declaration of matrimonye in the

Common prayer and did pronounce Them man and wife in the name of the Father Sonn and Holy Ghost.

. . . . .

Sunday 25. The Kinge at night first bedded the Queene.

Thursday 29. About 9 a clocke at night The Kinge and Queene came to Hampton Court, in the Greate Hall at the Screene waited the L^d^ Chancellor L^d^ Treasurer and many other of the Nobilitye and soe went up before Them into the Presence Chamber. The L^d^ Chancellor and Tre'rer onely kissed her Ma^ty's^ hand in the Hall.

Burnet is shown by this authoritative account to be incorrect in two statements, that Charles met Catherine at Winchester, and that the ceremony was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury, then the aged William Juxon, of whom Burnet adds that the Queen was "so bigoted that she would neither say a word nor bear the sight of him." One heretic was, however, much as another to Catherine, and she may very well have behaved to Gilbert Sheldon as Burnet mistakenly tells us she did to Juxon.

VII

Catherine's experience in England was one of misfortune from the first. Whether any woman as Charles's wife could have held his attention, even discounting the question of fidelity, may be doubtful, but that Catherine of Braganza could not have held any man's seems highly probable. She had no understanding of people, or of affairs, and made no attempt to repair her ignorance. Of extreme haughtiness with no natural dignity or parts to support it, a Catholic of the severest bigotry, as-

serting herself against even the most innocent lures of this world, insensitive to elegance as she was impervious to grossness, fussy and parsimonious in her household and affecting the society of bores and frumps, she would have been an uneasy soul in any environment, while in that of the English court no one could have been more ingeniously misplaced by a perverse fortune. She was, says Burnet, "of a mean appearance and of no agreeable temper," though Evelyn allows her to be handsomer than her ladies, whose complexions were "olivader, and sufficiently unagreeable," describing her as "though low of stature, prettily shaped, languishing and excellent eyes, her teeth wronging her mouth by sticking a little too far out; for the rest lovely enough." Grammont found her an agreeable mark for his malice: "The new Queen gave but little additional brilliancy to the court, either in her person, or in her retinue, which was then composed of the Countess of Panétra, who came over with her in quality of lady of the bedchamber; six frights, who called themselves maids of honour, and a duenna, another monster who took the title of governess to those extraordinary beauties." Pepys found in her no charm but "a good, modest, and innocent look." Clearly she was an unpromising candidate for Restoration favours.

VIII

Her entrance to court provided an immediate sensation. The exact date of Charles's first meet-

ing with Barbara Villiers is not known. His first night in London on the Restoration is said to have been spent in her company. She was at that time nineteen years old, the daughter of William Villiers, Viscount Grandison, and had married Roger Palmer in the preceding year, when she was already the reputed mistress of Philip Stanhope, second Earl of Chesterfield, and credited with other distinctions of a similar nature. Her husband was a man of no eminence, but in 1661 he became Earl of Castlemaine, Barbara in the meantime having taken open possession of the King's affections. Of her commanding beauty her severest censors made no question, and while it lasted her adroitness of intrigue was unmatched by any member of a court so greatly accomplished in that respect. Also she was utterly without scruples, of an abominable temper, insatiable in her greed for power and money, and without the slightest discipline of tongue or behaviour. With no sense of loyalty even to the King who made her, and ruthless to her rivals, her character as we see it in external presentation is one of shameless infamy. And yet she not only won Charles's favour, she kept it in almost undisputed control for several years, during which she gave him ample opportunities for jealousy and bore him five children. She could be, and frequently was, a common termagant, but Charles was not easily intimidated, even by women, and her beauty must have had some complementary graces to survive so long a test in such

company. We may be sure that we have heard the worst of a woman so generally envied and feared. For all her manifest depravity, she remains something more than a mere figure of vice. It may be added that she was created Duchess of Cleveland in her own right in 1670, and that her children were the Countess of Sussex, the Duke of Southampton, the Duke of Grafton, the Countess of Lichfield, and the Duke of Northumberland.

At the time of Charles's marriage, Lady Castlemaine was at the height of her youthful beauty and power, superb in her good looks and animation, and her position at court generally recognised. The prospects of a rival with titular rights seriously disquieted her, and she designed to avoid any risk of expulsion by securing a promise from Charles that she should be made one of the ladies of the Queen's bedchamber. When Charles presented this list of appointments for his consort's approval, Lady Castlemaine's name was struck out. Charles remonstrated, and Catherine declared that either he must accede to her wishes or she would return to Lisbon. There was a succession of unedifying scenes. Clarendon was called in as intermediary, but without success. He had been a close friend of Barbara's father, who had lost his life in the royal cause at Edgehill, and his paternal reproaches were but fuel to Barbara's fire. She formed an inveterate dislike for him, which contributed in no small measure to his ultimate downfall. Charles, whose interest in

Catherine could in no case have lasted a month, treated her with a coldly formal but studied respect, and went his own ways. Catherine's sole chance of authority vanished when it became evident that the Spanish Ambassadors' indelicacy had been founded on fact. The Queen drifts out of the story almost as soon as she enters it, a negative, pathetic figure, who had come to England without a single qualification for an almost impossible function. She settled into a tolerant indifference towards her husband and his favourites, kept a separate establishment, and on the whole was probably well enough pleased to be relieved of obligations that she had neither the capacity nor the inclination for fulfilling. Charles, equally satisfied, insisted on her official rights being observed, and there were even intervals of geniality in their relations. In the autumn of 1663, as we learn from Pepys, she had grown "a very debonnaire lady, and now hugs him [Charles], and meets him gallopping upon the road, and all the actions of a fond and pleasant lady that can be." That, however, was when Lady Castlemaine was temporarily out of favour. The attentions commonly paid to Catherine were in the nature of guns and bonfires for her birthday, or perhaps a ball or summer water-party. That Charles, as Grammont says, genuinely esteemed her though he had no semblance of love for her, is clear from the evidence. Her illnesses, which were frequent,[1]

[1] Pepys gives an account of her sufferings from spotted fever in

stirred him to an unquestionable, if strange, anxiety. The less reputable of the courtiers, such as Buckingham, who thought to flatter Charles by aiming their buffooneries at the Queen, got roundly snubbed for their pains. More importantly, when Catherine's continued childlessness raised the question of divorce, Charles, although he could not but have desired it on personal grounds, and although he was urged to it by the advocates of state necessity, set his decisive veto on the project. His open amours we may regard if we will as a standing dishonour to the Queen, but that, as has been suggested before in other connections, is to think of Charles in terms that are wholly irrelevant to facts. For the rest, it can at least be said of this unhappy business that he did what he could not to aggravate a thoroughly false position. A woman of more spirit than Catherine might have asserted her position more effectively, but a man as heartless as Charles has so often been proclaimed would certainly have treated her with less consideration than he did. Reviewing the circumstances in relation to the characters involved, and not with moralistic sentiment, the most culpable part of Catherine's treatment was the irregular—extremely irregular—payment of her allowance. Pepys suggests that at one period she received only a tenth part of her dues, but his

1663, and Arlington in a letter to be found in the Sandwich MSS. writes in 1666, "The Queen hath had a feaver and been twice let blood for it, but is now God be thanked, in a fair way of recovery."

figures are ambiguous.[1] She lived until 1705, making intermittent and always ineffectual incursions into politics. When Charles was dying she sent a message asking his pardon "if at any time she had offended him," to which he replied with becoming humour. Evelyn's report that she excused herself from visiting Charles at the end because of "her excessive grief" is charming.

IX

The first serious challenge delivered to Lady Castlemaine's ascendancy was in 1670, the year of her elevation in rank. Charles, under the growing rigours of his own Parliament in granting supplies, had slowly become entangled in clandestine relations with Louis XIV. Or perhaps entangled is hardly the correct term, since it is more than likely that Charles knew perfectly well what he was doing, and that he matched himself against the wiles of European diplomacy with deliberate skill, and, so far as his self-interest was concerned, with complete success. The secret Treaty of Dover, signed in 1670, was a discreditable document, but it was the instrument of an intrigue in which no one could have complained if he was cheated, since everyone knew that sharping was the code of the game. Equivocal honours were with Charles. Once again the cynical temper

[1] See Pepys, May 7, 1663. Of the forty thousand pounds per annum set aside for Catherine, she protested at that date that she had received but four thousand pounds. Whether this means four thousand pounds of a first quarterly payment, or of the preceding year's total, or in sum since her arrival, is not clear.

which the chroniclers have, against the evidence, been so ready to see operating in his personal relations, in those affairs that we assess by standards of humanity, displayed itself in a matter of policy in which his ready wits could discover no principles, humane or otherwise. The Treaty was directed against Holland and in favour of Catholicism. The first of these designs was in accordance with the English policy of recent years. The second was a betrayal by Charles of his trust, if in his mind there was any real intention behind it, which, however, is extremely doubtful. If there was not, then it was a calculated deception of which Louis was an appropriate victim. Charles received a handsome bribe for his signature, which was what he wanted. Louis received an undertaking from which France got nothing that had any appreciable effect on history. England renewed its war with Holland, which she would have done in any case, and it remained Protestant. Charles pocketed his money, and if we feel bound to disapprove of his action, we are certainly not bound to waste sympathy on his dupe.

The agent sent by Louis to conduct these negotiations was Charles's sister, Henrietta, Duchess of Orleans. In her train was Louise Renée de Keroualle, a Breton girl of good family, aged twenty, of a beauty with which Lady Castlemaine, eight years her senior, could still compete, but also of a gentleness, a refinement, and a natural taste against which the elder favourite was powerless.

She cared for the arts and good manners; she had, moreover, tact, a knowledge of affairs, and a gift for diplomacy. Of these the other had none. When Lady Castlemaine was displeased, which was constantly, she made scenes, loading Charles with public vituperation that would have provoked a less imperturbable wit to violence. Her influence on public policy depended wholly on her personal seductions, and a lavish display of finery was her sole conception of taste. Within a few months of Louise's arrival Lady Castlemaine knew that her position was lost. It suited Louis to have so dependable an envoy at the English court; it suited Charles no less. Louise was installed in what no one doubted to be Lady Castlemaine's place, and she filled it until Charles's death with a great deal of wisdom and affection. She was, it may be said, in some sense a spy, and as unscrupulous as spies are intended to be in the service of her master. But she cared for Charles, she conducted herself with dignity, and she very often gave him sound advice to his own interest when it did not conflict with her employment. She was created Duchess of Portsmouth in 1673, and had one son by the King, Charles Lennox, Duke of Richmond. She probably meant more to the finer side of Charles's nature than any other woman who came into his life. She soothed him, with a composure that he found in no one else, and encouraged his more amiable interests. In his last illness she tended him with the greatest care, and

a dissolute court was impressed by the constancy of a union that had no sanction. Louise lived to be eighty-five, dying in 1734, a generation after the Stuarts had passed from the scene of English history.

Shortly before the advent of Louise, Charles had been attracted by the charms of two ladies from the playhouses. One of these was Mary, or Moll, Davis, of the Duke's House, "an impertinent slut," but a dancer who pleased Pepys, and a performer of some note in Restoration comedies. She had one daughter by Charles, four years after their meeting, but, overplaying her part as King's mistress, soon lost her influence. Late in 1668 Pepys heard that Charles had lately "sent several times for Nelly," and at this time began a liaison so distinguished in the annals of romantic scandal. Eleanor Gwyn was then just under twenty, a girl of considerable talent and incomparable vivacity. Her origins were of the humblest, and her girlhood had been spent in selling fish and oranges in the streets, then as a tavern entertainer or doxy in the purlieus of Drury Lane, and later as a player at that theatre, where she engaged more eminent attentions. Against the solid pretensions of Lady Castlemaine and the breeding and accomplishment of Louise de Keroualle she directed guerilla tactics of licensed impudence, and found an unfailing ally in Charles's turn for humour. She mocked the former with an inimitable talent for mimicry, and called Louise the Weeping Willow. She

made no attempt to secure by intrigue what she could not command by her wit, and she seldom had need to do so. Claiming no privileges, she excited no popular jealousy, with the result that her very ample share of the spoils was generally allowed to be fittingly bestowed. She was, in fact, in her own time the picaresque heroine that she has ever since remained. To be angry with Nell Gwyn was merely to make oneself a public laughing-stock, as even her rivals were soon obliged to acknowledge. The anecdotage of her gay and fearless career is voluminous. At a time when the Duchess of Portsmouth, as Louise then was, found herself the mark of general disfavour because of her French connections, Nell Gwyn is said to have been mistaken, when driving through Oxford, for Louise; whereupon she put her head out of the coach window and exclaimed to the molesters, "Good people, you are mistaken; I am the Protestant whore." In Charles's presence she summoned their child with the words "Come here, you little bastard;" on being reproached by Charles she explained that she had no other name by which to call the boy, and a barony, subsequently translated into a dukedom, was the prompt sequel. Report credits her with two distinctions: that she alone of the King's mistresses was faithful to him during the term of their intimacy, and that she inspired the scheme for building Chelsea Hospital for pensioners. Exact evidence on neither score being available, Nell is entitled to the benefits of the

doubt. Charles's dying words, addressed to his brother James, are recorded as being "Do not let poor Nellie starve," but the new King seems to have paid no attention to the charge, and Nell Gwyn survived her royal lover only by two years. In taking leave of the three most prominent of Charles's mistresses, we may observe that on Easter Day, March 30, 1684, Evelyn heard the Bishop of Rochester preach before the King, and that Charles on going up to the altar was attended by three sons—the Duke of Northumberland, by Barbara, the Duke of Richmond, by Louise, and the Duke of St. Albans, by Nell.

CHAPTER IX

THE KING: PART II

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The King. Part II

I

YET another celebrated beauty here claims our attention for a moment. Frances Teresa Stuart (or Stewart), born in 1647, the daughter of a noble family, had been educated in France, and on returning to England became maid of honour to Catherine of Braganza. A notable figure in a court famous for its handsome women, she inevitably took Charles's fancy. But she was not at all disposed to join the already overcrowded ranks of his favourites. "It was hardly possible," says Grammont, "for a woman to have less wit or more beauty." Her principal diversions seem to have been blind-man's buff and building card castles, ably seconded by the Duke of Buckingham, whose trickle of engaging nonsense was inexhaustible. But her resolution was proof against all blandishments, and the more she resisted the more was Charles's determination fixed. The King even offered to discard all other connections, but without avail. Miss Stuart discreetly let it be known that if she was to share anything with him it must be his throne, and it was then that he listened for

a moment to counsels of divorce, to think better of it the next. The "innocent raw girl" of Pepys, "the inanimate idiot" of Grammont, in fact played a strong game which, although it was not quite the winning one that she had hoped, shows her to have had some brains at least behind the beauty in which her pre-eminence was allowed. In this connection it may be mentioned that she served as model for the figure of Britannia, which first appeared on the coinage in Charles's reign. Pepys at several points in his diary gives credit to the gossip that she had at last yielded to the King's solicitations, but is in the end persuaded that this was never so. But the preservation of her virtue had consequences of some historical importance.

II

In 1667 she suddenly married Charles Stuart, third Duke of Richmond, himself then thirty-seven years of age. The King was furious and made little attempt to conceal his chagrin. Her subsequent story does not concern us, but Charles took it into his head that the marriage had been contrived in some measure by Clarendon. However little or much truth there may have been in this conviction, it inflamed an antagonism that had for some time been asserting itself. At the same moment there was a crisis in public affairs. The Dutch fleet was in the Thames, flouting the naval power of England. It was then that it was most freely said that the King's pleasures had so

despoiled the national exchequer that no effective opposition could be made to the insult. The indignation of historians has been freely bestowed on this incident in Charles's career. Our view of the economic aspect of the charge has been stated, and it may further be pointed out that while he took a practical interest in the affairs of the navy, he was not the working chief of the naval administration. When it is objected into the bargain, by Burnet and later writers, that the King showed a shameful indifference to the safety and honour of his country by eating his supper while De Ruyter and De Wit were off Gravesend, we know that the temper is one not to be pacified by reason.

The public mind had recently undergone other severe trials. In the autumn of 1665 the plague had swept over London with terrible ferocity, as many as ten thousand persons dying weekly in September, a total number of not less than seventy thousand perishing in a few months. The effect of this calamity on the national life is difficult to realise, and recovery from the physical and mental shock took many months. Then on September 2, 1666, another disaster befell the city. The great fire of London has been held by a hygienic posterity to have been a blessing in disguise, but the disguise must have been dismally complete to the unfortunate citizens. By an amazing providence no life was lost, but the material damage was devastating. The Company of Stationers alone sustained losses amounting to nearly a quarter of a

million sterling. The city area was in ruins from boundary to boundary, and the salvage little or nothing. Whether the fire originated by design or accident was never discovered. Burnet and others suspected that the Dutch or the Papists knew something about it, but a court of inquiry could come by no reliable evidence. Charles behaved on this occasion with marked courage and resource, being on the scene day and night, helping in the work of relief, directing operations, assisting the fugitives who were pouring into the outlying fields, and encouraging all by his example. "London was, but is no more," was Evelyn's cry. The story has often been told, but two scraps of new evidence from the Sandwich papers have their interest; they are taken from the ambassador's journal, he then being in Madrid:

September 1666.
Sunday 30.

This morninge came a Gentleman to mee who was sent expresse hither by the Conde de Molina (Sp. Emb^{sr}) from London; who gave me the most Deplorable account of the destruction of the greatest part of that famous citty by fire. Begunn accidentally in a Bakers house near the Bridge (as he s^{d}) and consumed all the Citty and suburbs thence through Smithfield unto Holborne Bridge, soe unto Shoe Lane and all alonge Fleete Streete until within half a score of houses of Somersett House in the Strand. It begann on Sunday $^{2}/_{12}$ of September and then stopped not untill Thursday following, an eastward wind raging exceedingly. An accident stupendious to be so prevalent in consuminge a Citty when noe tumult of the people occasioned or forwarded it, but all in alta pace and the Kinge and Duke personally day and night assisting (to direct and apply remedies and liberally rewardinge those that laboured therein) to their infinite honor and

estimation with the common people, and also the Government of the Citty[ns] applyinge all the Helpe that was possible.

Tuesday Oct. 2.

L[d] Arlington Whitehall Sep[t] 10 writes notice of the sad calamity of the burning of the Cittye of London w[ch] continued many days and w[tn] such violence as was most terrible and distracting to them, not only for the thinge itselfe but the consequences of it. But by Gods favor it stopped at last miraculously without being accompanied with any further circumstance to affright them. So that now they are in theire witts again, and all but the losers as cheerefull as if noe such thing had befallen them.

But the nation, or at all events Parliament, was less cheerful than Arlington might seem to suppose. On November 8, 1666, he again wrote to Sandwich, "The house of Commons have sate long this day upon debate of making his Ma[ties] supply effective and have resolved the doing it soe in part by a subsequent Land tax, the rest for the raising ready money by a Poll bill, a bill for sealed paper. . . ." [1] When, however, the Dutch demonstration in 1667 gave fresh tongue to detrimental rumours, the prospect of facing Parliament again with requests for money was less promising than ever. Nerves were ragged after a succession of disasters and what were regarded as humiliations, and Charles knew that some act of propitiation would be very timely. Clarendon had been a respected but never a very popular figure. A strong faction at court, led by Buckingham and Lady Castlemaine, wanted nothing more than his overthrow, and by a long course of utterly despicable

[1] Sandwich MSS.

propaganda and insinuation had succeeded in creating a public feeling against a man who in his aloof self-sufficiency scorned the arts of the demagogue. With this feeling Charles had, as we have seen, some personal grounds for sympathy, and now the affair of Miss Stuart and the Duke of Richmond excited a long-smouldering resentment. Given sufficient ill-will it is always easy to trump up the indictment of any occupant of high office, and Clarendon had, moreover, none of the graces that were likely to make it dangerous to set him up as a culprit. Burnet says bluntly that Charles decided to sacrifice his old servant in order to placate Parliament. Burnet, admirable narrator as he is, often fails to convince us in his interpretation of motives, and we may believe that Charles's decision was not as calculated in its perfidy as that. Nor can Clarendon's apologists be implicitly followed in their view that he was a man without blame. That he was gravely short-sighted in his treatment of Charles we have seen, and that a serious breach would sooner or later be the outcome of that misjudgment was from the first more than probable. But while that was no excuse for such measures as were taken, it was at least open to argument that the Lord Chancellor had so far detached himself from the temper and real political needs of the time as to be no longer a fitting dictator of the Government. This, however, is not the place to examine the extremely complicated circumstances that attended Claren-

The habitt taken up by ye King & Court of England
Anno 1666. wch They Call a Vest.

FROM LORD SANDWICH'S MS. JOURNAL

don's fall. The thing that concerns us is Charles's conduct on the occasion. Even should we allow that Clarendon's resignation would have been for the public good, we should still be compelled to deplore that conduct. Charles was goaded by his own not quite unreasonable displeasure, and by insistent and specious demands from others, into deserting his minister, but in allowing himself to be so goaded he was guilty of the one unequivocally shameful action of his life. If Clarendon had to go, then by every obligation of common decency Charles was bound to see that he should depart in dignity and honour. Instead of which he sent him away in disgrace to exile. Clarendon, as this study will have shown, is in many respects an ungenial, even a forbidding character, but he was a man of unsullied faith, great parts, absolute loyalty, and steadfast courage. He had given these for twenty years to Charles's service. He had shared his master's poverty to the extreme of not knowing where to turn for the simplest necessities when his wife was lying in; he had more than any other man shaped the policy that had brought him back to the throne; and he had settled the kingdom when without him it might well have overrun once again into chaos. He had neglected endless opportunities in the past six years of advancing his own fortunes, and, if he had been tiresome in his admonitions, he had saved the King from many gross and dangerous follies. He was now nearly sixty years old, tired with the

labours of a life exacting far beyond the common lot, and he loved his country with an undiminished passion. Charles should have been inflexible in securing to him every possible consideration, and all he did was to refuse the outrageous demands of a fanatical hatred that Clarendon should be thrown into prison or even executed. Short of that, he spared the fallen man nothing. Many historians have seen in this an exemplary case of his habitual cruelty. We can see in it nothing of the kind. The veriest saint of charity constantly does things that cause suffering did he but know it, though that is the kind of philosophy that leads us nowhere but to the dead-ends of passive resistance and vegetarianism. Charles, by the simple standards of conduct, was notably a kind-hearted fellow who disliked giving pain, sometimes to the point of weakness. Moralists incensed by his amours deny this, but they deny it in face of the plainest evidence. Also, he was a brave man. Charles I would have saved Strafford from a far heavier fate than Clarendon's had he dared. But cowardice had no place in his son's nature. Why a kind and brave man should have behaved as Charles did to Clarendon is not easily comprehensible, but the fact remains. It would seem probable that the provocation was a good deal greater than is shown by the records. It may be remarked again that we know all about it from Clarendon, but nothing about it from Charles. If we could hear a dispassionate statement on the matter from

the King himself, it is likely that our views would be considerably modified. But while this is a possible explanation of an event that otherwise seems to have no logical relation to character, it is by no means offered as an excuse. Clarendon had been exasperating, treating the King with a condescension that often bordered on insolence, crossing his wishes often it would seem for no other reason than that they were his wishes, more and more alienating his colleagues by assuming authority to himself, making it plain as time went on that he considered nobody's advice worth asking and treating with undisguised contempt the age of which he was the political leader. Nevertheless, with all deductions made, the balance against Charles remained a serious one, and he did not honour it. In 1667 Clarendon was asked to deliver up the Great Seal, impeached, deprived of his office, and ordered to leave England. And Lady Castlemaine, says Pepys, "ran out in her smock into her aviary looking into Whitehall garden; and thither her women brought her night-gown; and stood joying herself at the old man's going away," while the gallants talked to her in her birdcage, Buckingham perhaps among them, enlivening the occasion with improvised lampoons. Clarendon bore his defeat with composure, and lived to write the works [1] that have been the source of so much knowledge and not a little misunder-

[1] The profits of these were applied to the founding of the Clarendon Press.

standing of the King by whom he was abandoned. He died at Rouen in 1674, and by a somewhat obscure irony was buried in Westminster Abbey.

III

Clarendon was succeeded in power by a ministry appointed by Charles, and famous as the Cabal, a name composed of the initials of its members, Clifford, Ashley Cooper, Buckingham, Arlington, and Lauderdale. These men individually were of small distinction, but as a political symptom their election was significant. Sir Thomas Clifford had done good service in the royal cause, had been with Charles in exile, and was a firm Roman Catholic. Anthony Ashley Cooper, notorious as the first Lord Shaftesbury, made religious toleration an article of faith with a liberality wholly inconsistent with his natural corruptness. Of Buckingham enough has been said. Henry Bennet, first Earl of Arlington, was an industrious public servant, thoroughly versed in political stratagem, the most responsible leader of the faction that had destroyed Clarendon, and Catholic in sympathy if not in open profession. Lauderdale, Burnet's "coldest friend and most violent enemy that ever was known," was an uncouth and wholly irresponsible martinet, who "was no lover of Popery," but inspired by a lasting hatred of Charles I, not averse to any measures that would discredit the late King's policy. As Mr. Trevelyan puts it, "there was not one sound Angli-

can in all the Cabal."[1] This circumstance has been generally taken as proof of Charles's own inclination. Be that as it may, the accession of this very unimpressive group of men to power in 1667 marked an intensification of the religious struggle, conducted with an extreme bitterness and often with shocking brutality, that agitated England for the next twenty years. We need but note some of its more memorable incidents.

It was under its influence that James Scott, the son of Charles by Lucy Walter, came into prominence. He had been created Duke of Monmouth in 1663 at the age of fourteen. In the absence of legitimate issue to Charles, the Duke of York was heir to the throne. His Catholic interests were common knowledge, and a matter of growing apprehension throughout the country. A movement was started to legitimatise Monmouth, and strongly supported rumors were spread to the effect that Lucy was the King's lawful wife. The design was a desperate one, without the slightest chance of success, but it excited Monmouth's own ambition, and in spite of formal disavowals from the King, it persisted and even gained force. In November, 1668, Pepys was seriously discussing with his gossips the likelihood of Monmouth being made Prince of Wales, and among the Sandwich papers is the following unpublished document:

[1] *England under the Stuarts*, 1925, p. 364.

The affadavit of John Heron Esq^r^ of Godmanchester in the County of Huntingdon taken upon oath before the L^ds^ of his Ma^ty's^ Most Hon^ble^ Privy Councill the 29th of March 1669. Who saith

That about the beginning of this instant month of March he the Deponent being in the house of Edw^d^ Raby of S^t^ Ives Gen^t^ heard John Cole of Sutton in the Isle of Ely and County of Cambridge openly read a letter directed to him as he pretended by some person of quality in his Ma^ty's^ Court at Whitehall, which he the said John Cole said that he had received from London that morning by the poste, to this effect, that there would be great alteracons in State affaires on a suddain, That his Highness the D. of Monmouth would presently be proclaimed Prince of Wales, before the Parl^t^ should be prorogued, And if not, this Parl^t^ would be dissolved and a new one chosen. That the D. of Albemarle was in a dying condition not likely to live, and the L^d^ Fairfax already nominated in his roome to be Generall. That these or words to this effect were read as aforesaid in presence of Edw: Raby and of two other persons whose name the Dopon^t^ doth not at present distinctly remember but knows their dwellings. And that the letter out of which the afore^d^ words were read was shewed to the s^d^ Edw: Raby as he the s^d^ Edward Raby told this Deponent.

JOHN HERON.

And that John Lindsey of Stanson was one of the persons unnamed present at the reading of the letter as he believes.

Ten years later, when the country was thrown into convulsion by Titus Oates and his stories of a Popish plot to kill Charles and set James in his place, Monmouth was still regarded with popular favour as the safe solution of the problem of succession. Oates was a lying madman, but his so-called disclosures were received with ready credulity. He flung accusations about in a reckless frenzy, not hesitating to direct suspicion against the Queen herself. London was terrorized, and

Oates was given apartments in Whitehall with a guard to protect him from papist fury. Numbers of perfectly innocent people were executed on his testimony and half the scoundrels in the country were let loose on an orgy of pursuit and informing. Charles could not disregard public opinion without incurring the charge of Catholic sympathy, and he was forced to profess a share in the general alarm. But he strongly suspected Oates of being a rogue, and once caught him out in a palpable falsehood in examination before the Privy Council. He was, however, powerless to stem the tide of popular feeling, and had to content himself with inaction while Oates incited one outrage after another. It has been suggested, not without reason, that Charles may well have felt some shame in this, seeing that he was called upon to sign the death warrants; but it has not been suggested what else he could or ought to have done. Swollen with success, the demented Oates fulminated from perjury to perjury, received a pension of twelve hundred pounds a year, and retired from as shocking a scene as has ever disgraced the good sense of the English people. In 1685 he made inadequate expiation of his offence by being whipped through the streets of London, but with redoubtable impudence managed to secure the favour of William III, again to be disgraced. He took up with the Wapping Baptists, was turned out of that community as a notorious fraud, and died in 1705, having lived fifty-six years too long.

Monmouth's share in the Popish Plot scandal was not conspicuous, though throughout the disreputable proceedings he was an object of national attention. But in a later catastrophe he was more directly concerned. By 1683 Charles's attempt at repudiation of parliamentary control had led him into flagrantly unconstitutional and later into nefarious expedients for supplying his treasury. He was beginning to encroach on civil liberties, and to devise means of distraining on the funds of public bodies. Flimsy pretexts were found for depriving the City of London of its charters, and diverting its supplies to the King's use. Charles II was, in short, showing signs of the misguided conception of privilege that had been fatal to Charles I. It was in these last years of his reign, if at all, that Charles was the victim of his own machinations with Louis XIV. The evil influence of France was commonly suspected in this growing sufficiency of the King to himself, and it was conceived that the freedom of the country, that had been so dearly bought, was once again being threatened. A confederacy was formed with the purpose of nipping this new tyranny in the bud. Its members were the Earl of Essex, Lord Howard of Escrick, Lord Russell, Lord Grey, Algernon Sidney, and John Hampden the younger, grandson of Cromwell's Hampden, and with them Monmouth. What precisely their policy was to be was not clear, but they engaged themselves to a general course of opposition. That

they intended violence is unlikely, but unhappily for them extremist members of their own party, assuming that a confederacy of such influence must have a real weight of authority behind it, decided that a suitable opening to the new campaign would be the assassination of the King. They engaged in what is known as the Rye House Plot, the intention being to waylay the King at Rye House in Hertfordshire on his return from Newmarket to London. The conspirators were detected, captured and hanged, and warrants issued for arresting the members of the confederacy. Monmouth and Grey escaped; of the other five, Howard, reduced to craven terror, turned King's evidence, Essex committed suicide in the Tower, while Russell and Sidney, the two heroic spirits in the group and inspired by pure patriotism, were executed. Their trial was made shameful in the annals of English law by the presidency of the calamitous beast called Jeffreys. No sufficient evidence, even in that disgraceful court, could be found to convict Hampden. It was made known to Monmouth that if he would supply this he might look for clemency himself. To his honour, he refused to be a partner in Howard's wickedness. He was ordered by the law officers to appear at the trial, which he failed to do, and as they could not execute Hampden on no evidence, they fined him forty thousand pounds by way of warning. Monmouth left England, and Grey took part with him in the subsequent rebellion the tragic story of

which belongs to another place. In spite of the assertion made by Pepys that he spent his time "most viciously and idly of any man," Monmouth was a man of courage and address. But for his pretensions to the throne, he might have lived on affectionate terms with an indulgent father, who was disposed to treat him with every generosity. Becoming involved in a merciless political vortex, he destroyed himself by a vanity that a little wit would have told him there was no hope of gratifying.

IV

One other figure joins the grouping of Charles's court in these later years. In 1676, Hortense de Mancini, now Duchess of Mazarin, whom Charles might once have married, arrived in England. Louise de Keroualle no longer enjoyed the King's enthusiasm as she had done. Hortense had been through many matrimonial and financial adventures, which, however, had left her unfaded. Theoretically she had inherited a large fortune from her uncle the Cardinal, but it had somehow disappeared, and she asked for, and obtained, a pension from Charles. She was a year or two older than Louise, but at thirty is said to have been in the prime of her beauty and attractions. She was welcome at a court that for all its reputed brilliance Charles could at times find to be depressively tedious. Buckingham's jokes were growing stale, domestic jealousies were no longer amusing,

license was losing its attractions, and the clamour for favour was not so stimulating as it had been sixteen years ago. The younger wits were engaging and did something to enliven the routine of Whitehall, though less than Charles could have wished in affording company to his settling habit of mind. Eminent among these were Sir Charles Sedley, born in 1639, Charles Sackville, sixth Earl of Dorset, born in 1638, and the younger Rochester, born in 1647. It is to their exploits that the Restoration court chiefly owes its reputation. They were all lyric poets of occasional but exquisite inspiration, but it is unhappily true that the men who could write "Not Celia that I juster am," and "To all ye ladies now at land," and "And in age in her embraces past" were also less occasionally dissolute bullies. Even Charles, lethargic in discipline as he was, could not stand their excesses, and was stirred to effective protest. But he liked good verses; and high spirits within bounds, as they sometimes were, acted as a tonic to his own somewhat melancholy disposition. For Rochester he had a natural preference for the sake of old times with his father. In 1665 he wrote a charming letter to Sandwich, which is now first printed:

St. James'es, *July* 6 [1655].

I have little to say to [you] in order to the business of the fleete, my brother having sent you all the directions necessary, and I am sure I neede not be in paine for the good conduct of the fleete now tis in your hands; the cheefe businesse of this letter is to recommend this bearer my L^d^ Rochester to your care, who desires to go a volontire with you, so I have

nothing more to say to you at this time, only to wish you good successe, and to assure you of my constant friendship and kindnesse.

C. R.

[Cover] For the Earle of Sandwich.

Rochester and his companions, however, were now more commonly a vexation than a comfort to a man who at forty-six had seen more than enough of lewd brawling, and who knew more about life than they would ever learn. The advent of Hortense de Mancini was an agreeable diversion to a still robust but jaded man, but it had hardly more significance than that. Evelyn's note on her death in 1699 describes her thus: "an extraordinary beauty and wit, but dissolute and impatient of matrimonial restraint, and banished, when she came into England for shelter, lived on a pension given her here, and is reported to have hastened her death by intemperate drinking strong spirits."

V

The policy of Charles's later years became more and more aloof from popular consent, and correspondingly dangerous to his own position. But his natural intelligence saved him from crossing the line from danger to disaster. Two doubts may be permitted to remain: whether in the national circumstances of his later years a strictly representative government would have been more effective than his own wholly irregular but often extremely shrewd control; and whether in any case

it was not inevitable that once he had served the purpose of restoring the monarchy a change in dynastic fortunes was not desirable and indeed inevitable. Had his later tendency to despotism really broken down the new principle of constitutionalism, in the name of which he had recovered his throne, the consequences would have been lamentable beyond reckoning to the future of England. But some instinct in him to the last precluded that misfortune. The condition of England from 1680 to 1685 was in many respects deplorable, and for this Charles himself was largely responsible. But he had served his purpose, and he never quite forgot what that purpose was. He was the head of the state at a time when a new social and political order was being established, and it means a great deal more to his credit than is commonly allowed that, in spite of all his errors and limitations, when he died after twenty-five years of power he left that establishment secure. Some men in his position might have done more for their country, but it is certain that most men would have done less.

VI

If his policy in later years knew many vicissitudes, his personal character underwent little change. The fevers of youth abated, and a mind never given to animosities sought only quietness and congenial company. By the time he was fifty, Charles had settled into a simple regularity of

habit that is little consistent with the legend associated with the Merry Monarch. The title is, indeed, one that seems curiously misapplied in any case. Ardent, reckless even, fond of the good things of life, heartily bored by bores, readily susceptible to charms of any kind, a patron of wit and something of a wit himself, he was all this, but merry is not the word. As he now walked along the Mall with his dogs, or drove out to Kew, or strolled home from a meeting of the Royal Society, he looked back on a life crowded with stubborn purposes and hardy enterprise. The past fifty years were already stretching away into long and infinitely varied perspectives of history. He had played a great part in a drama that had been conceived on an heroic scale. What the drama precisely was and what his part he could not tell. He reflected, perhaps, that his personal life had been a scandal among the godly; and yet the mistresses of his affection now seemed so little to be sensational figures of reproach, and after all he had done very well by them. If other people felt it necessary to be ashamed of his morals, let them; he was not. And although he was feeling remarkably well, he was fifty, and perhaps he had not been quite so prudent as he ought to have been. But repining was folly, and this evening he would take supper with Louise, or Nell, or why not with both? But it was a pity there were so few people of sense about to talk to. On second

thoughts, he would take a little exercise in mathematics this evening instead.

He lasted until fifty-five, and the end was unexpected. The cause was supposed to be apoplexy, but the ingenuity of modern medical science has disputed this. He had a seizure on February 2, 1685. A bishop and an archbishop immediately began to search his spirit, but could get no satisfactory response. A surgeon who happened to be on the premises took prompt measures of another kind, displaying, so Evelyn tells us, great "dexterity, resolution and presence of mind . . . to let him blood in the very paroxysm, without staying the coming of other physicians, which regularly should have been done, and for want of which he must have a regular pardon, as they tell me." This was on a Monday; by Thursday Charles seemed to have rallied, and a bulletin encouraged hopes of his recovery. Towards night there was a violent relapse. It was then that the scene with Huddleston, already described, took place. Later he is said to have apologised for being so unconscionable a time in dying. Towards morning it was plain that the end was near. "He went through the agonies of death," says Burnet, "with a calm and constancy that amazed all who were about him." And then the bishop lets himself go. Charles would talk no religion, saying merely that the "hoped he would climb up to heaven's gate." Instead he insisted on begging James to look after the Duchesses of Portsmouth

and Cleveland, his children, and Nelly, on sending a message to the Queen, and on explaining to James as he handed him his keys that he was ready to go. This we learn from the joint narratives of Burnet and Evelyn. And then Burnet sublimely adds that he gave the Duke not one word of "advice about religion or government, the interest of the nation, or any other subject that would have better become this serious and important moment." The time of Charles's death was about eleven o'clock on the morning of Friday, February 6, 1685. Burnet informs us that James let the King's body lie neglected without any state and magnificence, "and gave it a funeral at last not so great and expensive as that of any ordinary gentleman." On February 14 Evelyn notes that Charles was that night "very obscurely buried in a vault under Henry VII's Chapel at Westminster without any manner of pomp, and soon forgotten after all this vanity." James's own explanation was that "his late Majesty dying in, and his present Majesty professing a different religion from that of his people," ceremonial difficulties made it necessary to observe some privacy. And of that, also, Charles would have enjoyed the humour.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY

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Summary

I

WE may now attempt a brief summary of Charles's character, in the light of the story that has been told. The first prominent suggestion that his early experiences were responsible for the delinquencies of his later years is to be found in *A Character of King Charles II,*[1] by George Savile, first Marquis of Halifax. This work has, I think, in some respects been overpraised by its latest editor. It is written in a style often of tedious epigram, and brief as it is tires us with platitude. When we read "He had a Mechanical Head, which appeared in his Inclination to Shipping and Fortification, etc. This would make one conclude, that his Thoughts would naturally have been more fixed to Business, if his Pleasures had not drawn them away from it," we are reminded of the divinations of our sporting journalists. But the *Character* nevertheless contains many illuminating observations, and written as it was by a man who in his various offices of state had ample opportunity

[1] See *The Complete Works of George Savile.* Edited by Walter Raleigh, Oxford, 1912.

of cultivating his knowledge of Charles, it adds materially to our own. Halifax has many shrewd and many handsome things to say, but of the view advanced about the early years we have already given our opinion. We believe it to be a false one. At the Restoration Charles had a record that was, notwithstanding excesses, a highly creditable one. His nature and his experience had then alike admirably prepared him for the office to which he was called, and we have attempted to show fully what was the principal cause why the promise of that moment was not altogether fulfilled.

As a King he was the victim always of divided purposes, not only by the necessity of his political environment, but also through a rooted distaste of his own for the ceremony and what often seemed to him to be the shams of public life. Halifax remarks that his wit was of too familiar a charm for a prince, and that his love of ease that might have been becoming to a private man was below the dignity of a throne. That was just it. Charles could never bring himself to forget that he was a man, and often found it difficult to remember that he was a King. The abstract idea of the King's aloofness, a rare and admirable mystery in itself, is always apt to be a little uneasy in the presence of humour, and in Charles's mind humour was never still. He could not, try as he would, be pompous about himself, and pomp has its function in kingship. He enjoyed his authority, but he was

never persuaded that he came to it by anything but a lucky chance. You could never tell that in full robes he would not wink at some acquaintance who stood staring in the crowd.

Not that on occasion he was insensible of his place. Especially was he quick to pull up any foreign power in a breach of etiquette; if he could jest about being King at Whitehall, to be King of England in the eyes of Europe was another matter. When Lord Sandwich was conducting the treaty with Portugal in 1668 he found himself suddenly in serious danger of disgrace because he had placed his name under that of the Spanish Ambassador. The following letter from the Earl of Manchester, Sandwich's cousin, is taken from the Hinchingbrooke papers.

WHITEHALL, *June* 5 [1668]

MY LORD,

This bearer can give you an account of our affairs in generall there is one particular which gives your friends some trouble it is in relation to the signinge of the treaty with Portugall wherein you have subscribed your name under the Kinge of Spanes Ambassador in that which is sent hither to be ratified by the Kings greate seale itt is likewise informed that in all meetings you give the precedency to the Conde [ ] I hope these are misinformations and that you will give a good account of your actions for you must except to find those that will critically enquire into your proceedings, my friendship and kindness obliges me to serve you and to wish you all happiness, with a very real affection

Your Lord^{sps} Most Humble servant

E. MANCHESTER.

Sandwich cleared himself, but was careful to take no such risk again.

In affairs Charles found himself in grave dif-

ficulties, as he could not fail to do, as soon as he attempted a single-handed control. But that such control could have been exercised as successfully by any other king in the history of constitutional England may be doubted. He chose a course of reckless danger, and if he covered it only with some loss of credit, cover it he did. He sometimes went near to provoking a national opposition under which he must have been broken, but individual conspiracies found themselves confronted by a firmness and ability safely beyond their own. And if he went far, he knew when to stop. When James was advising some too patent an abuse of royal power, Charles told his brother that if he wanted to go again on his travels he was free to choose, but that for himself he was too old.

II

His personal behaviour was as capricious as is common to most, to the astonishment of those people who suppose that man is a logical creature. Halifax allows that "he had a little over-balance on the well-natured side, not vigour enough to be earnest to do a kind thing, much less to do a harsh one; but if a hard thing was done to another man, he did not eat his supper the worse for it." If this be censure, who shall escape it? Enough has been told to show that Charles in his human relations was governed by a genuine kindness of heart. His amours have, I think, been visited in the past with sufficient indignation to save us the necessity of

supplementing it. It is enough to say that, however much they may have violated the accepted code of our society, they reveal to examination somewhat less of natural vice and depravity than the chroniclers have asserted.

Charles's treatment of Clarendon stands in another category. We may understand it, but we have no desire to condone it. Regarding Charles as a character alive with dramatic elements, and not as a moral problem, there is little in this story that we should like to alter had we the power. But his desertion of Clarendon is a blot that we could wish away. As we have shown, it has not even the interest of being true to himself. It directs us merely to one of those blind spots that we find in almost every character, and of which no solution offers itself. But, in suggesting that there was more behind the incident than we know, it may be recalled that Halifax, with evident reference to Clarendon, observed, "If he sometimes let a servant fall, let it be examined whether he did not weigh so much upon his master, as to give him a fair excuse."

III

The Restoration court was a loose one; it was often a dull one. But it encouraged wit and learning, and in this Charles gave a decisive lead. He was the most enlightened patron of the drama that has ever been on the English throne. He cared for poetry, suggested the subject of *The Medal* to

Dryden, and made him a present of a hundred gold pieces for writing it. Lely was his court painter. So good a judge as Pepys tells us that he had some knowledge of music, and liked it; he made Purcell organist at Westminster and the Chapel Royal. His own accomplishments as an amateur of science have been mentioned. He founded the Royal Society, took a personal interest in its proceedings, attended its meetings, and, as Evelyn agreeably informs us, provided the table at its first anniversary dinner with venison. He chaffed the members for trying to weigh the air, and lost no opportunity of watching and encouraging their experiments. He gave employment to Christopher Wren, and was directly responsible for his appointment as Surveyor of Works. His coins were engraved by the Simons and the Roettiers, whose mastery of the art has never been excelled. He had an eye for dress, and impressed his own good taste on the fashions of his time. In 1666 he introduced a new costume to court, designed at once for elegance and economy. Pepys describes it thus: "A long cassocke close to the body, of black cloth, and pinked with white silk under it, and a coat over it, and the legs ruffled with black ribband like a pigeon's leg; and upon the whole I wish the King may keep it, for it is a very fine and handsome garment." Evelyn speaks of it as an "Eastern fashion of vest . . . a comely dress." Charles, however, discarded it after a short time, saying that it made his courtiers look like magpies.

By good fortune I have found a drawing in Sandwich's journal, evidently made by himself, which gives a very personable impression of the style.

IV

That Charles in his youth was of irregular habits does not notably distinguish him. In maturity he settled into a careful precision. "He grew by age," says Halifax, "into a pretty exact distribution of his hours, both for his business, pleasure, and the exercise for his health, of which he took as much care as could possibly consist with some liberties he was resolved to indulge in himself. He walked by his watch, and when he pulled it out to look upon it, skilful men would make haste with what they had to say to him." He rode hard, tiring out his companions, of whom but few could keep with him in the field. He could play five sets of tennis against good opposition, and win three. He danced little, but, says Pepys, better than the Duke of York; though when put to it he could keep the fiddlers going through the night in Lady Castlemaine's company. He kept himself in condition, was a great walker, and, occasional bouts apart, abstemious of food and drink. When he was nearly forty he astonished his attendants late one night by racing away from them, jumping into a boat and sculling down the Thames to Somerset House, and climbing over the walls to visit the Duchess of Portsmouth, which Pepys regarded as "a horrid shame." At the same age he took four

pounds off his weight in a day by exercise in the tennis court. That his death was really caused by apoplexy is improbable. The symptoms as recorded suggest something less constitutional, nor do his habits and physique support the diagnosis. Poison has been suggested, with some plausibility, but unconvincingly; it may have been some form of the stone. Had Charles lived to-day, it is unlikely that he would have died at the age of fifty-five. In any case, the popular idea that he wore himself out by excesses has no foundation in fact. But he made a good end; he may even have felt that he had lived long enough, and history, contemplating the conditions of England at his death, has with some justice taken the same view.

V

A likeable, informing man we think he must have been, one who gave back courtesy for courtesy, and valued merit in the common contacts of life. One who could on occasion "speak most dexterously against himself," and very contentedly "bribe Charles Stuart against the King." [1] There have been greater Kings in England, but few abler and none more entertaining. If he talked a little too much and told his stories too often, we at least who do not have to listen need like him none the less for that; moreover, our own best friends may say as much of us. Geniality no one denied him, and it is a great solace in a world so often harsh and

[1] Halifax.

crabbed. Epicures of emotion who valued his favours the less because he bestowed them freely on others do not engage our sympathy, though we would not forgo the assurance that "he would slide from an asking face." Halifax made amends for a captious opening by a noble peroration: "A Prince neither sharpened by his misfortunes abroad, nor by his power when restored, is such a shining character, that it is a reproach not to be so dazzled with it, as not to be able to see a fault in its full light. It would be a scandal in this case to have an exact memory." Some may hesitate to accept the philosophy of this generous plea, but he must be secure of himself indeed who is not moved by what follows: "If all who are akin to his vices should mourn for him, never Prince would be better attended to his grave." And with that we may leave him, acknowledging his charm; acknowledging no less the force of a man who, be his faults what they may have been, had character, and made it memorable in action.

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